new Masses

OCTOBER 16, 1934

10c

Plotting America's Pogroms

One Anti-Semite Wilts Under Fire

Third Article in a Series

By JOHN L. SPIVAK

The Saar—Powder Keg of Europe

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Warring on War

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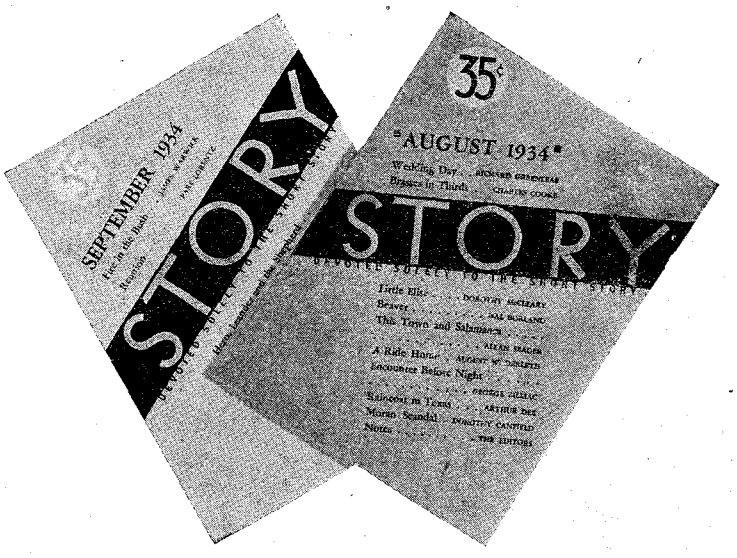

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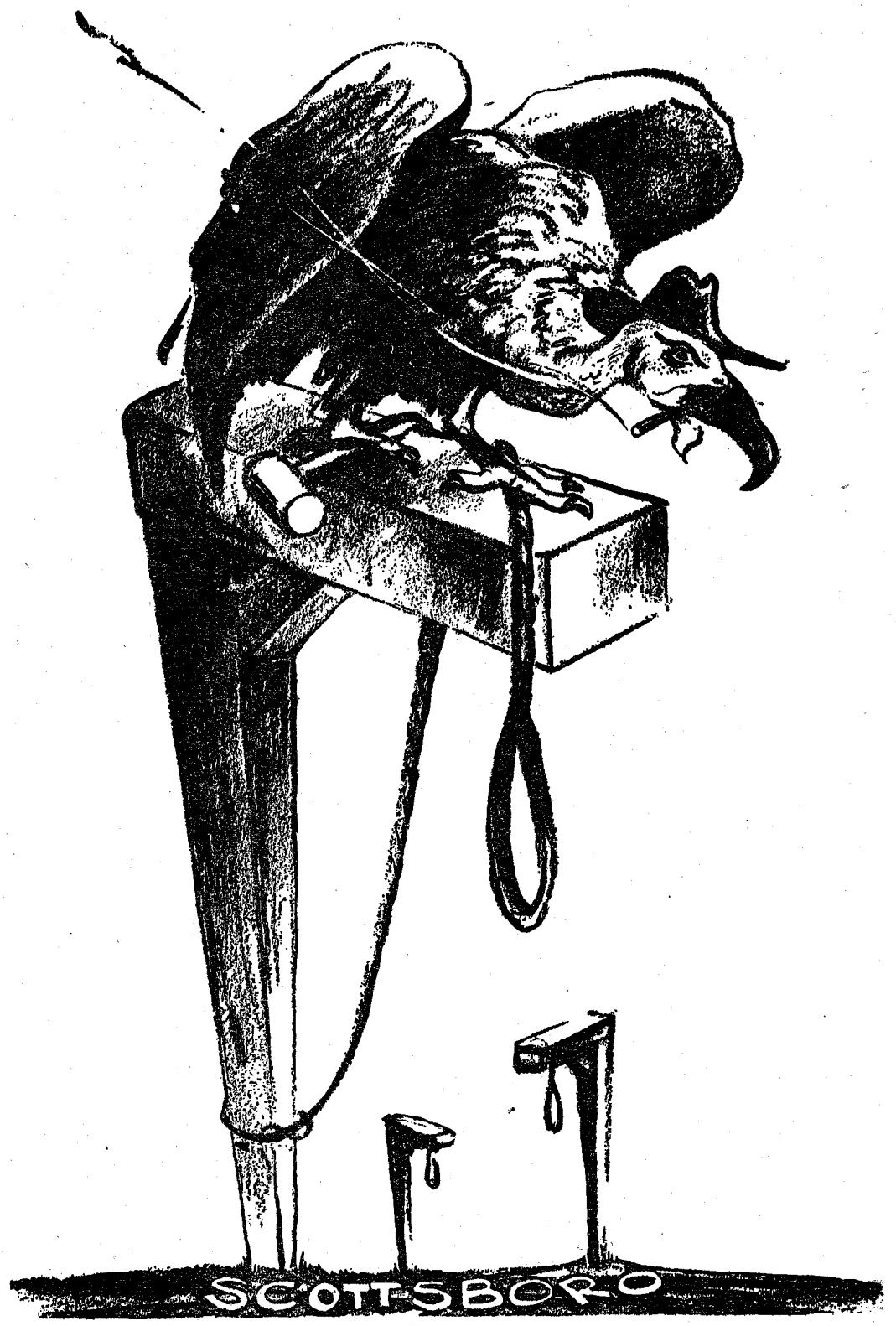
New Masses

OCTOBER 16, 1934

SAMUEL LEIBOWITZ, chief trial lawyer of the Scottsboro defense, has given ammunition to the Alabama lynch rulers by deserting the case and slandering the International Labor Defense, which has saved the lives of the boys to date. Leibowitz times his attack just as the Alabama Supreme Court for the third time has refused a rehearing of the cases of Heywood Patterson and Clarence Norris. Ambitious to conduct the appeal to the United States Supreme Court, Leibowitz resented the fact that Walter Pollak, a constitutional lawyer of long experience, was selected for this work. According to the statement of the I.L.D., "Mr. Leibowitz is out of the case because he has chosen to put his personal and political ambition above the interests of the Scottsboro boys. He is not a constitutional lawyer, and therefore is completely unsuited to take the case to the U. S. Supreme Court." In answer to Mr. Leibowitz the I.L.D. and the Communist Party are calling for renewed mass pressure to force the review of the case in "the court of last illusions" in Washington, and to demand unconditional freedom for the seven Negro boys, convicted by perjured evidence and in an atmosphere of lynch hysteria.

THE desperate anxiety of the Alabama authorities to burn the boys as a concrete expression of Negro subjection, is shown by the methods they have used. Not long ago, John Howard Lawson, playwright, was indicted for criminal libel, on the score of his honest reporting of the prejudice and intimidation shown in Alabama court proceedings against Negro defendants. Only the other day, two attorneys, Daniel Swift and Sol Kone, were arrested in Nashville by Tennessee authorities on a framed-up charge of attempting to bribe Victoria Price. Victoria Price is Alabama's star witness. Her testimony was directly challenged by her companion, Ruby Bates. Swift and Kone were brought up for star chamber extradition proceedings before Governor McAllister of Tennessee. Extradition to Alabama was ordered, but before the order could be carried out, defense attorneys obtained a federal writ of habeas corpus. They served the writ just as Alabama deputies were about to drive off with the two lawyers. The deputies threw the writ out of the window and raced away with their prisoners. Gov. Lehman, of New York, induced to intervene with Gov. Miller in defense of two New York citizens, got back a telegraphic condonation of the kidnaping. Thus, as in the Mooney case, the original frame-up of the Scottsboro boys leaves in its wake a train of illegalities, official kidnapings and lurid frame-ups against all friends of the Negro people! Clarence Norris and Heywood Patterson are sentenced to die on December 7. Less than two months' time remains to save them. A nation-wide wave of determined protest is needed to arouse the Supreme Court to action! Protests should be sent to Gov. B. M. Miller, of Alabama, President Roosevelt and the U. S. Supreme Court.



THE HIGHER COURT *Limbach*

THE drug clerk has long been the scapegoat of the drug profession. Exploited and overworked by the chain

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store and drug proprietors as much as any factory hand, he has been deluded into accepting his miserable conditions by adroit flattery about the "public" character of his work. The clerks have been working as much as 70 to 80 hours a week, making $18 to $20, working split shifts, getting no vacations — in short, sweatshop conditions have ruled. After spending three years at college, paying $300 a year tuition, then serving a four-year apprenticeship as a bottle-washer, floor-mopper and general handy man, he graduated into the class of the licensed pharmacist only to find himself as badly off as any of the industrial proletariat. And over this general condition of poor pay, long hours, and intense exploitation, was heard constantly the sweet song crooned by the college professors, the Board of Pharmacy and the boss druggists' association, the Pharmaceutical Conference: The pharmacists do not strike! Abruptly, the song has ended. For the first time in fifteen years a general strike of drug clerks has been called. In the Bronx, 1,600 drug clerks, members of the Pharmacists Union of Greater New York, walked out, demanding wage increases and reduction in working hours.

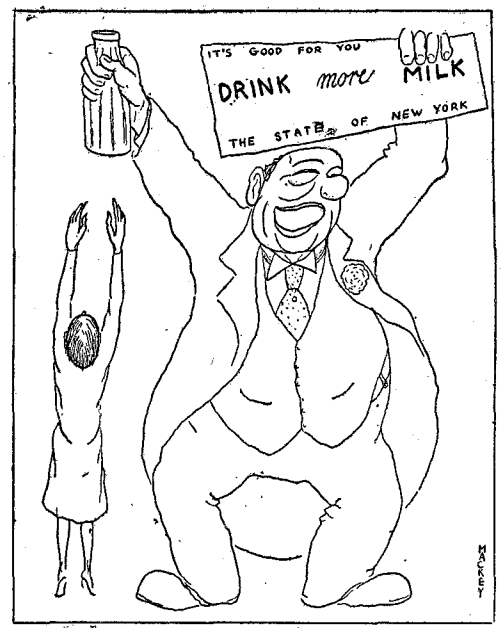
THE Pharmacists Union, started in 1932, has grown in numbers tremendously. Contrary to the employer-generated belief that the pharmacist "does not strike" the call of the Union was so effective that 100 drug proprietors signed up with the Union on the eve of the walkout. The Union has been winning steadily. Picketing and a widespread publicity given to conditions in the profession have won general sympathy. The Pharmaceutical Association, the drug bosses' organization, has proved ineffective in its efforts to raise a campaign of public fear. Even the threat to utilize the Board of Ethics of the Board of Pharmacy, which has the power to revoke licenses, has not succeeded in weakening the Union. The demands of the Pharmacists' Union call for:

Registered pharmacists,	$32.50	54-hr. wk.
Junior clerks,	23.50	54-hr. wk.
Apprentices,	16.00	54-hr. wk.

No hiring or firing without the consent of the Union.

A one-week's vacation with pay for all employees.

SOME three to four million trade unionists in America are watchfully waiting on the conclusions of the 54th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor now being held in San Francisco. The late Samuel Gompers used to call it "this great parliament of labor." Like most parliaments in the world today, it is having trouble. For 54 years the A.F. of L. has been a great factor in American life. And it still is. But its leadership has grown senile and corrupt. The rank and file, voiceless for so many years, today clamors for action. They sense acutely the fundamental contradiction in the 1934 convention: Mr. William Green's policies are now committed to the support of labor's exploiters. He is committed to the New Deal, to collaboration with the enemies of the working class. But hunger grows. The torture of stretch-out is not confined to the textile industry. Real wages fall. The rank and file want organization to protect themselves. They want to utilize every weapon available—their best is the strike. But the President has said "Truce!" and it is being echoed by Green, Woll, and the Federation's entire leadership.



Mackey

INSTEAD of grappling with the great issues of the day, the A.F. of L. leaders, like a gang of thieves, have gone to quarreling over the booty. Internecine warfare threatens among the leadership; there is open threat of a split and the formation of a new building trades grouping outside the A.F. of L. The fight is over no matter of principle. Control of the building trades section is of importance for a set of very materialistic reasons indeed. Whoever controls the Building Trades Department deals officially with the national reconstruction and planning board which has millions of dollars at its disposal. Then there is the rivalry between Lewis and Green. John L. Lewis, of the United Mine Workers of America, has eyes on the presidential chair. His jockeying for power is seen in his resolution to increase the executive council from 11 to 28. But both Lewis and Green agree on one major principle: Expel the Reds! The Red Scare is prominent on the agenda. It is demanded by the industrialists and the Administration — Mr. Green's collaborationists. Mr. Green will use it to fight the demand of the rank and filers for the Trade Union Unity League proposal—"One union in every industry." They demand a policy of militant industrial unionism—against class collaboration and against acceptance of blacklist, speed up, low wages, and long hours. But the anti-Red united front will find its chances of achievement slimmer this year than ever before. Mr. Green must have had a few bad moments last week when his round-robin letter to all locals "to expel Reds" was tossed in the waste basket by the Milwaukee workers. There the Federated Trades Council disposed of his suggestion with little ado. The 54th annual convention of the A.F. of L. will find Milwaukee no isolated case. The election of "Red" Bridges as president of the large A.F. of L. local of longshoremen in that very city where the convention is being held, must give Mr. Green and his colleague Mr. Paul Scharrenberg secretary of the California State Federation, Tom Mooney's double-crosser, food for some bitter thought.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, who is editor-emeritus of our wistful contemporary, The Nation, has grown wistful over another little liberal mistake he has made. It seems, according to his own confession, that Mr. Villard was delighted when Mayor LaGuardia appointed General O'Ryan as New York's police chief and strike-breaker-extraordinary. "I was largely responsible for the friendly attitude taken by The Nation toward General O'Ryan on his appointment. I remembered him," says the stern and uncompromising old pacifist, "as the most efficient militia general in France." The General happened to serve, however, on the Kernan board in France. This court-martial board became notorious for the vicious verdicts it turned in. It had no mercy on the enlisted men, and believed in discipline by extreme terror. It sentenced young soldiers to ten and twenty

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years for minor offences, but most of its brutal verdicts have since been exposed. So Mr. Villard is very sorry he once liked this Prussian junker. But in beating his pacifist chest in contrition, the grand old man of liberalism uncovers even deeper reaches of his strange mind. "Mayor LaGuardia has tried his best to give a square deal to labor," Mr. Villard says in this same Nation article. This is only a month or so after the Mayor's little Nazi scheme for making labor leaders register with the police had been stopped by the indignant workers of New York. "The taxi strike was a disgrace to the city," continues Mr. Villard. "The strikers were utterly lawless in overturning and wrecking cabs, infringing on the rights of innocent passengers, impeding traffic, and generally disturbing the public order. The much-boasted riot squads never seemed to turn up at the right moment. . . ." There is more in the same vein, including a defense of the right of Communists to free speech, "though there are hoodlums among them, and their leadership deserves condemnation." There is also praise for General Pelham D. Glassford, "who did such a grand job with the Washington police in the handling of the bonus army. He rode a motorcycle and was always in evidence at the scene of trouble."

MR. VILLARD is clearly on the side of those who defend private property. So are most liberals, and whenever a fight is on between those who guard the status quo and those who must change it or perish, you can be certain that Mr. Villard and his kind will find all their instincts leading them into the camp of the police. But they are liberal and broad about it. They are like the Czarist detective in a story of Chekhov who was trying to persuade a revolutionary that he himself was a liberal. "I have had to earn my bread," he said, "I am the father of a family. But I have never been like the others—no, no, I have never tortured. That is wrong—I do not believe in torture." Mr. Villard wants a strong, efficient police force to defend private property, but he doesn't want them to be too obviously brutal. This is the classic position of the liberal in the history of our revolutionary time. In every basic situation, when the militant working-class asserts itself, the liberals flee for protection to the armed forces of capitalism. But they don't believe in torture—no, they would prefer a bloodless counter-revolution — they would prefer cops who can crush strikers' skulls painlessly, National Guardsmen who will bayonet women and children in the liberal spirit.

TEACHERS throughout New York State were just blotting their signatures on the "harmless" Ives Bill Loyalty Oaths, when the Board of Education swept into action. Provided with a legal basis, the Board called upon its examiners to develop procedures for detecting and excluding liberal and radical teachers.

> "Let us urge," Dr. Ryan, president of the Board of Education, wrote to Dr. George J. Smith, chairman of the Board of Examiners, "that in considering candidates in your forthcoming examination, you make personality and character your first consideration, and that under the head of character you consider loyalty and love of country."
>
> "It matters not how much book knowledge they may have or how clever they may be at passing examinations. . . ."
>
> "Let us have men and women who know and understand *and believe in the principles* upon which the American form of government is based; not the people who simply know the history of their country, but rather those who take pride (!) in it as well. . . ."

The following day, the chairman of the Board of Examiners wrote back:

> We hold that it is incumbent on every teacher to instill in his pupils a respect for our country's best traditions, and a faith in the capacity of our American democracy by orderly changes to remedy the existing evils. . . .

And he outlines a four-point program of inquisition through which the Examiners would ferret out teachers too clear-sighted and too honest to believe in capitalism. First, prospective teachers would be forced to answer questions concerning their "attitude toward American institutions." Secondly, "Special efforts (would be made) to secure from local colleges such full information as to character as may be derived from college records and reports from individual professors." Thirdly, the Board would engage in "prolonged studies" to evolve more effective methods of weeding out the "disloyal." Finally, the chairman of the Examiners wrote:

> In addition, we propose to formulate a statement to be required from each candidate concerning his attitude toward subversive political or economic measures, toward the use of force or disorder in furtherance of such or any measures. . . .

Dr. Smith concluded with a warning to principals "on the need of discriminating observation of the conduct and attitude of teachers on probationary tenure."

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TO CALL this program of the Board of Education fascist is not to extend the meaning of the word one jot. Here are underlined statements that political beliefs will be *the* basic question in determining a candidate's appointment. Hereafter the sine qua non of the teacher, according to the Board, is militant loyalty to capitalism and a jingoistic pride in the history of American capitalism. And the Board makes it clear that no substitute will be accepted. A liberal attitude toward capitalism is as much under the interdict as a radical: nothing less than fervent espousal of capitalism, signed, sworn, and taught, is to escape the axe. Furthermore—and this is startling bluntness even in Fascist countries—a prospective teacher's knowledge and proficiency are to be considered of no avail. To expedite detection of the "disloyal," the Examiners openly set up an elaborate spy system, which is to operate from the moment the prospective teacher enters college as a student through his probationary period as a teacher. In other words, the "harmless' Ives Bill has been quickly converted, as Communists predicted, into an attack on students and teachers.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 3—Gorman, on behalf of United Textile Workers' Union, accepts Roosevelt truce. . . . Pulitzer Prize Play jury, disgusted by slights, resigns in body. . . . Transportation Coordinator Eastman urges pooling of three billion dollars worth of railroad freight cars. . . . Harvard refuses to accept $1,000 scholarship offered by Hanfstaengl. . . . World Series opens in Detroit. . . . Columbia University fights city attempt to restore number of exempt parcels of property to tax rolls. . . . Jury completed for Insull trial in Chicago. . . . Yale Chapter of National Student League protests against official welcome to Italian Fascist student group. . . . Five deputy sheriffs arrested on murder charge after one is killed, 100 hurt in attack on striking textile workers at Bridgeport, Pa. . . . Senator Nye asks government monopoly of munitions manufacturing and 98 percent tax on incomes over $10,000 during war. . . . United States Public Health survey shows unskilled workers' span of life is only half that of highly paid business men due to lack of proper diet, housing conditions and medical care.

Thursday—A.A.A. says drought caused food shortage, will bring shift in customary diet of people, sharp price rise in foods. . . . Richberg says "codes of fair competition under N.R.A." may have to be turned back to "good old competition." . . . Norman Davis gets secret orders for Naval Disarmament Conference. . . . Prosecution charges Insull caused $100,000,000 loss to investors through fraud. . . . Ocean mail carrying ship lines owe United States $111,366,757, hearing reveals. . . . Georgia's Supreme Court, denying appeal in Scottsboro case, sets date of execution of Clarence Norris and Heywood Paterson for Dec. 7th; appeal to United States Supreme Court planned. . . . Ward Line asks court to limit total damage claims in Morro Castle disaster to $20,000 or less. . . . American Radio Telegraphers Association plans strike next week for better working conditions at the same time that Marine workers plan walk-out.

Friday—Morgan library, hardly ever open to public, and long exempt, is put on tax list. . . . Secretary Perkins tries to persuade A. F. of L. Convention that Roosevelt truce proposal does not mean compulsory arbitration. . . . Bronx drug clerks go on strike. . . . Gen. Hugh S. Johnson, retired N.R.A. dictator, lends his personality to a "Founder's Day" celebration of a New York department store. . . . Bridgeport textile strike is ended. . . . Leibowitz is out of Scottsboro case; Walter Pollak to draw up Supreme Court appeal. . . . Despite I.S.U. leaders' efforts to call off strike, seamen decide to close N. Y. shipping halls immediately preparatory to strike next week. . . . Scientists in tests extract gold and silver from ocean waters.

Saturday—N.R.A. price fixing declared illegal by Federal Court in Memphis. . . . Taxing of church property may lead to "social revolution" by hampering country's "foremost agency for social stability," asserts Bishop Thomas E. Molloy in Brooklyn. . . . Gov. Lehman demands Alabama safeguard persons and civil rights of New York lawyers arrested in Tennessee and forcibly taken to Alabama on charges of bribery in Scottsboro case. . . . Los Angeles Times "discovers plot" to send girls to warships distributing Communist literature to sailors. . . . Secretary Perkins declares today at least 90 percent of American people have a real sense of personal insecurity because of unemployment and business conditions.

Sunday—Broadway Tabernacle, New York, picketed to prevent eviction of war veteran from church-owned house. . . . Roosevelt wants C.C.C. continued indefinitely. . . . Charles Ponzi, "get-rich-quick-faker" defrauding thousands, is deported to Italy. . . . Federal Trade Commission starts inquiry into textile industry wages and profits. . . . If Jews permit themselves to become identified with Communism, America may witness a pogrom worse than any under Czarism in Russia, James W. Gerard, ex-Ambassador, declares.

Monday—A. F. of L. Convention votes for six-hour-day, five-hour-week. . . . New Jersey votes murder indictment against Hauptmann after Lindbergh identifies his voice as ransom extortioner. . . . Charles M. Schwab in Pittsburgh court asks leniency for embezzling bank president Ellis S. Shelly, whom he made head of bank. . . . Aaron Sapiro goes on trial in New York court on jury bribing charges. . . . Crews of 9 ships in New York Harbor go on strike at call of Joint Atlantic Seamen's Strike Committee. . . . Communist Party calls for mass protest against execution of 2 Scottsboro boys on December 7th.

Tuesday — St. Louis wins World Series, 4—3, from Detroit. . . . New Deal saved U. S. from revolution, Richberg says in Chicago. . . . Paterson, N. J., silk workers union moves to call general strike. . . . Penniless woman faints in N. Y. restaurant from hunger. . . . United Fruit Company announces $10,000,000 profits for three-quarter period of 1934 while strike of 25,000 banana workers in Costa Rica grows. . . . John D. Rockefeller, Sr., departs for Florida estate. . . . Walter M. Citrine, British Trades Union Congress secretary, tells A. F. of L. convention Fascism is greatest danger facing labor.

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Revolution in Spain

AN ARMED proletariat is fighting for its life in Spain. Masses are thrown around the fascized ministries in Madrid.

The workers of Spain have learned a lesson from Austria and Germany—that the Social Democratic leaders cannot be trusted. They have been plundered and robbed of their victory by a bloated bourgeoisie. All workers' parties have formed a united front—Communists, Socialists, trade unions and anarcho-syndicalists. The revolution in Spain, now four years old, has reached the decisive stage of demanding all power to the workers and peasants. The Communist Party of Spain, which three years ago had 800 members and received 40,000 votes, today has over 30,000 dues-paying members and in the 1932 election polled 600,000 votes. Its strength has forced the united front, forced the open struggle against immediate fascization by the Lerroux agents of Spanish capital—forced the treacherous Largo Caballero to declare for a dictatorship of the proletariat!

To understand these events let us briefly recapitulate from February 22, 1931, when Socialists and Republicans signed the pact of San Sebastian, pledging to oust the king and establish a Democratic Republic of Workers of All Classes. One of the principal signatories was Alcala Zamora, leader of the insurgent intellectuals, who was later to be elected the Republic's first president.

On April 12, 1931, this bloc routed the Monarchists at the municipal elections. Alfonso issued his farewell manifesto and fled the country. The June elections gave the Republican-Socialist bloc an overwhelming victory. Millions of workers voted for what they thought was their own Revolution, only to be bitterly disillusioned. The Socialists, under Professor Julian Besteiro and Largo Caballero, captured 113 seats; the Radical Republicans (with right leanings) of Lerroux got 86 seats; and the Radical Socialists (Republicans with Socialist "leanings") won 54 seats. The Socialists, however, declined to assume power. They said Spain was not yet ready for a Socialist government. Their leaders actually deplored their large political representation! In this Socialist policy there is a resemblance to Trotzky's teachings. Writing on the Spanish revolution, Trotsky believed that the slogan of the bourgeois-landowners' Republic was also the slogan of the proletariat. Let the bourgeoisie perform its historic mission. Feudal hangovers in Spain must first be destroyed—by whom? By profiteers and exploiters! The bourgeoisie proceeded to carry out its historic mission of robbing and plundering the workers and farmers of their share in the Revolution. Largo Caballero, as Minister of Labor, fought against strikes, against the seizure of land, against workers and farmers.

In the year that followed, the Republic floundered in the sea of capitalistic world crisis. Strikes totalled 6,000. The budget was increased by 600 million pesetas. The peseta dropped to the lowest point in 31 years, due to the maneuvers of Rockefeller's Chase National Bank which secured for the Standard Oil fifty percent of Spain's gasoline business. The cost of living rose, exports decreased to below prewar levels. To suppress the discontent, Spanish capitalists began to plan a new fascist coup. The defeated reactionaries reorganized their forces. Under the leadership of the Catholic Popular-Actionist Jose Maria Gil Robles, they formed the S.E.D.A. (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Right Parties) and began a systematic campaign in the villages, still the stronghold of Catholicism, especially among the women, who are notoriously religious. The Coalition government helped the reactionaries by tying down the workers. Azana formed the Guardia de Asalto, Storm Troopers who are now shooting down revolutionary masses. A law was passed making the carrying of weapons a crime, but the law was never applied to fascists. Strikes were declared illegal unless a 10-day notice was given. The Jurado Mixto (Labor Board) was set up to arbitrate differences between employees and wage-earners—(a move that Roosevelt has just proposed to put over on U. S. workers). Communist publications, Mundo Obrero, Juventud Roja (Red Youth) and others were suppressed although there was no legal censorship.

Azana's government was superseded by a centrist government headed by Lerroux, the present butcher of the counter-revolution. This government found it was expected to be a rubber stamp for the Right, and dissolved. In the new elections, the Socialists lost their big majority. C.E.D.A. gained 170 votes at the expense of the Left bloc, and Robles' Accion Popular Catolica secured 113 of these. C.E.D.A. chose Alejandro Lerroux again to form another government, but Lerroux, a traditional fighting Republican, was not yet entirely trained to swallow orders. A number of minor cabinets followed and failed in rapid succession. Finally in 1934, Ricardo Samper, a Valencia Republican who had served under Lerroux, governed as the "front" for C.E.D.A. and Robles.

Every indication pointed to Samper's collapse on October first, the date for reconvening Parliament. A struggle was expected over the Catalonian Agrarian Law, giving the land to rent-paying peasants. The law was declared unconstitutional. Samper wanted to arbitrate the question. Robles denounced him for weakness, and demanded stronger measures of suppression. On September 20, Samper declared that Spain was in the presence of a revolutionary movement. The Basque municipalities were revolting. Forty mayors were jailed with their councils. The Catalonian Esquerra (Secessionalists) declared itself in permanent session to aid the Basques. Finally, and most telling blow of all, the Alianza Obrero (United Labor Front) was formed, comprising the Socialist Federation of Labor, the Syndicalist National Confederation of Labor and the Communist-led Red Trade Unions. The Government discovered that the Socialists were in possession of arms.

On October 1, the reconvening of Parliament, Robles openly denounced the Samper government for weakness and vacillation. President Alcala Zamora, playing traitor to the revolution he had headed in 1931, summoned Lerroux to form a government. Lerroux refused to do so until he had heard the wishes of Gil Robles. The Robles forces successfully demanded that their fascist friends be given three key positions in the new Cabinet: Agriculture—to defend the interests of the feudal landlords; Labor—to promote the interests of finance capital, and Justice—to effectuate the fascist laws.

The workers answered with the general strike paralyzing the entire Spanish peninsula. The general strike was quickly raised to the level of a revolutionary struggle for power.

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Plotting the American Pogroms

3. *One Anti-Semite Wilts Under Fire*

JOHN L. SPIVAK

[*The third article in the series by John L. Spivak was to have dealt with the role played in the present anti-Semitic campaign in America by rich Jews who have contributed to anti-Semitic organizations. That article is postponed a week to make room for the interview given below with Sidney Brooks, economic research director of the Republican Senatorial and Congressional Committee, and to Brooks' letter to* THE NEW MASSES. *Brooks' letter is well worth studying. The points of fact he raises will be dealt with later. The unmistakable fact that stands out all over his letter — as well as in Spivak's interview with him—is that the Nazi, the Fascist, the anti-Semite, when under exposure and attack, is a very different creature from the arrogant Nazi, Fascist and anti-Semite when he is doing the attacking.*—THE EDITORS.]

WASHINGTON.

I MET a scared agent of the secret espionage Order of '76 by appointment in the Racquet Club on 16th Street where Washington's blue bloods, diplomats and "big business" men gather to inveigh against Communism and the "Menace of the Jew."

I was in the State Department when I telephoned Sidney Brooks, of the Republican Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committee for an interview. Readers of THE NEW MASSES will remember that Brooks, close in the confidences of Senators and Congressmen, was shown to be the son of Col. Edwin Emerson, notorious Hitler agent, who first organized the anti-Semitic movement on a national scale in the United States.

I had just been informed by THE NEW MASSES that a letter from Brooks had arrived. The questions Mr. Brooks raises as to the accuracy of certain statements in my article of Oct. 2 can be settled only after examination of data which is not available here in Washington. I hope to be able to settle that question next week. But meanwhile I tried to get an immediate appointment with Brooks. He asked me to call later.

Two hours later, with Seymour Waldman of the Daily Worker Washington staff beside me I telephoned his office again. His secretary answered.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Spivak. Mr. Brooks isn't here just now, but he asked you to call him at the Racquet Club."

I had never been to Washington's Racquet Club. I had heard a lot about it. I knew that Kurt G. Sell, the Nazi foreign press correspondent, lived at the swanky club, and Sell is always in touch with the German embassy. I thought it was fitting that a NEW MASSES reporter see an Order of '76 espionage agent at this place.

I took a stenographer along with me to take notes of the interview so that Brooks could not say he was misquoted. The club, however, would not permit her in and with Waldman beside me I took my own laborious and detailed notes. Mr. Brooks came down the wide luxuriously carpeted stairway to receive us. He is of medium height, rather dark.

We were ushered upstairs to a stylishly furnished sun parlor. There, a well-dressed man to whom he introduced us without mentioning his name, rose to greet us.

"I wrote to your magazine," Brooks began. "They have my letter. I have said all I have to say."

"I understand that you do not want to say any more than you wrote. There is only one thing I am assuming: that you are, as you wrote, a patriotic American?"

"Of course."

"Certainly then, you would be interested in helping to expose any subversive activities in the United States which threaten the peace of the country?"

"I am not interested in uncovering subversive elements."

The man with him feigned to read his newspaper. His eyes were glued to the same spot on the same page. At this he raised his head and looked at Brooks.

"I'm interested in a number of things," Brooks continued. "But I am not engaged in the work you mentioned."

He was so pathetically on the defensive that I smiled assuringly to him.

"But I hadn't said you were—as yet. I merely asked you if you were interested in uncovering such subversive activities."

"I might be opposed to them but I am not free to participate actively."

"Isn't it your duty as an American citizen?"

Brooks threw his cigarette away.

"That is a question I am answerable for only to myself."

"In your application to the Order of '76 you stated that you were in the army. There you took an oath to defend the Constitution of the United States. Did that oath end when you were mustered out?"

"So far as the army was concerned it did."

"And you felt no desire to uphold the Constitution after you left the army?"

Brooks looked helplessly at his friend whose eyes were still glued to the same story on the same page.

"I've expressed myself in my letter," he finally answered.

"All right. Now let's get to your letter to THE NEW MASSES. You say you never heard of William Goodales, the name under which William Dudley Pelley was registered at the Hotel Edison?"

"That's right."

"Had you ever been to the Hotel Edison?"

"Yes. I've been there a number of times."

"When? Do you remember the dates?"

"I know the dates but I refer you to the Hotel Edison for that information."

"Did you ever meet Pelley?"

"No."

"Did you ever meet Royal Scott Gulden, of the mustard king family, who is the director of the Order of '76?"

"Yes—but not while I was registered at the Hotel Edison," he added desperately. "I don't remember just when I met him. I guess it was on the day I made the application to join the Order."

"Your father, Col. Edwin Emerson, is in the United States. Has he communicated with you about the articles in THE NEW MASSES?"

Brooks looked helplessly at the man with him and bit his lip.

"Yes," he said coldly, his mouth a thin line.

"What did he say?"

"That is a matter between my father and myself."

"You knew that your father and his wife were broke at times. Then they suddenly got some money. Did your father ever tell you where he got that money and from whom?'

"That is an unnecessary question."

"All right. You saw your father at 17 Battery Place in New York, did you not?"

"Yes."

"You knew that his rent was being paid by the German Consul General and that he was engaged in organizing anti-Semitic movements in this country?"

"I know nothing about that."

"Did your father ever take you into his confidence as to what he was doing in this country?"

"I knew he was connected with the Friends of Germany—"

"Did you ever hear him speak on anti-Semitism?"

"I heard him speak once at the Harvard Club in New York. His subject was Pirate Treasure."

Brooks looked at me and grinned triumphantly.

"Wasn't it at this innocent meeting that you met Gulden and Guenther Orgell, head of the German Foreign Secret Political Service in this country and—"

"I don't remember whom I met at that meeting."

"Isn't it strange that the leaders of anti-

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Semitic propaganda in this country all happened to gather at the Harvard Club to hear your father speak on Pirate Treasure at that date?"

Brooks did not answer.

"Do you know how your father makes his living?"

"The details of what my father does for a living are not my business," Brooks exclaimed.

"Did your father ever talk to you about anti-Semitism?"

"I believe so—" he said slowly. "Yes, he talked to me about anti-Semitism but I can't remember when."

"You say in your letter to THE NEW MASSES that you never met Mr. Kelley at 17 Battery Place, the building where the German Consul General has his offices?"

"That's right."

"Where did you meet him?"

"At his home or mine," Brooks said. He lighted another cigarette. His fingers drummed nervously on the arm of his chair.

"What was Mr. Kelley's buisness?"

"I think he was a consulting engineer. I don't know."

"He is a friend of yours and you don't know his business?"

Brooks did not answer, he drummed more rapidly on the arm of his chair.

"What was on the door of his office at 17 Battery Place?"

"I don't know."

The man whom he had with him raised his head from the newspaper. He had not turned a page. He was still glued to the same story.

"Did you ever go to his office at 17 Battery Place?"

"Yes—once. But he wasn't there."

"Who first called your attention to the Order of '76?"

"Mr. Pelley." Brooks caught himself and rushed on. "Possibly Mr. Gulden. I don't know. I don't remember."

"Did your father ever talk to you about it?"

"Yes."

"Might your father have suggested your joining the order?"

"I prefer not to answer suppositions."

"Did your father suggest it?"

"I don't remember."

"When you joined, did you know it was an organization to spy on Communists and Jews and to spread anti-Semitic propaganda?"

"It was represented to me as a patriotic organization."

"Then why was it necessary to take your fingerprints?"

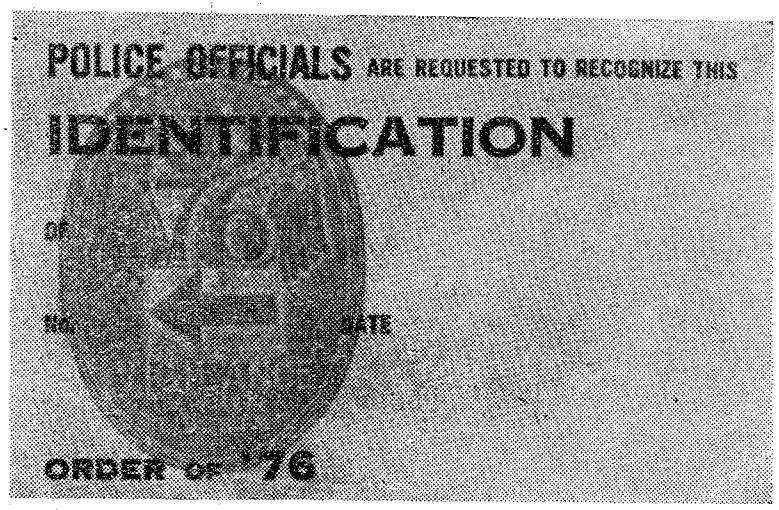
"I don't know."

"You say in your letter that you joined for purposes of information. What do you mean by that?"

"That's a broad term. I leave that for anybody's definition."

"The National Civic Federation, too, is a patriotic organization. Why didn't you join that instead of the Order of '76?"

Brooks' hand went through his hair. His lips closed into an even thinner line.



Identification card issued to members of the Order of '76

"I can't tell," he said finally after a long pause.

"You learn a lot from the senators and congressmen you come in contact with. Did your father ever ask you for any information?"

"We talked about general subjects. Of course he asked me questions, but they were general subjects—the sort that anyone would discuss."

"Do you know that the Order of '76 is engaged in anti-Semitic work and espionage?"

"I don't know what the organization is doing."

"As a member, aren't you interested?"

"No."

"Then why don't you resign?"

Brooks looked blankly at me for a moment and at the man still reading the same story on the same page of the newspaper.

Finally a sheepish grin spread over Brooks' face.

"I don't know."

"Have any senators or congressmen talked to you about THE NEW MASSES articles?"

Brooks rose from his chair.

"That's a personal matter. I would rather not answer it. All I can say is that I never talked to any senator or congressman about the Order of '76. And I never told my friends about it."

"Why not? Because it was a secret espionage society?"

Brooks again looked helplessly at the man with the newspaper.

"I don't think so," he said finally.

"Now that you know what the organization is for, and you state in your letter to THE NEW MASSES that you do not believe in anti-Semitism or the interference in this country by foreign powers, do you intend to resign from the Order of '76?"

"No," Brooks exclaimed bitterly.

He rose from his chair.

"I am very busy. I told you when you first came here that I said all I had to say in the letter. I will not say anything else."

As Waldman and I walked to the broad stairway I looked back. Brooks was still standing there exactly where we had left him, his hand clutching the arm of a chair. The agent of the Order of '76 seemed badly scared.

[*Following is the letter from Sidney Brooks*]

To THE NEW MASSES:

It may not be necessary but I hope you will allow me to make some comments on the article in your issue of October 2, 1934, "Plotting the American Pogroms." "1. The Organization of Anti-Semitism Here," by John L. Spivak.

The first statement to which I would like to refer is that

> "On March 4, 1934, he (Sidney Brooks) drove to the Hotel Edison and went directly to Room 830 where a 'William D. Goodales of Los Angeles,' as he registered, was awaiting him. Mr. 'Goodales' was William Dudley Pelley, head of the Silver Shirts, who had come to New York secretly to confer with Brooks and Gulden! After this conference the two went to Gulden's office where they had a confidential talk that lasted over an hour, during which an agreement was made to carry on their anti-Semitic propaganda more effectively."

I wish to state that on March 4, 1934, I was engaged in my regular work in my office in the Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C. I was also so engaged from February 24 to March 8 inclusive. I attach affidavits to this effect. I have never heard the name of William D. Goodales and to my knowledge have never met or corresponded in any way whatever with William Dudley Pelley. I am, however, familiar with the writings of Mr. Pelley. I read his magazine just as I read The New York Times, The New Republic, The Commercial and Financial Chronicle, The Nation, Today, and other publications of information or opinion.

I never met Mr. Gulden at the Hotel Edison and never went to his office in the company

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of anyone. I have met him at other places and other dates, as stated later.

> Follows the statement that "A certain Paul A. Toal wrote a letter on March 6, 1934," after the alleged conference.

I have never met any man by that name and had never seen or heard of any such letter until I read it in your magazine.

> Follows the statement referring to my "mysterious visits to New York" where I "always went to 17 Battery Place" and "at that address he visited one John E. Kelly."

I generally went to 17 Battery Place to the office of my father, as well as to other business offices in that building, not including the office of the German Consul General. My visits were never mysterious. I never met John E. Kelly at 17 Battery Place.

> Follows the statement that "In a letter to Kelly dated as far back as December 27, 1933, he (Sidney Brooks) wrote: 'I will be in New York Friday to Monday and can be reached in the usual manner—Gramercy 5-9193 (care Emerson).'"

I wrote such a letter to Mr. Kelly addressed to his office at 17 Battery Place on that date. I append a full copy of the letter. For your information, Mr. Kelly is a personal friend with whom I have naturally discussed matters of general interest, at his home.

> Quoting: "We now find that this man close to high officials of the United States government is meeting people to merge anti-Semitic organizations, calling on persons in the German Consulate building, and having a telephone number care one Emerson."

As you point out, I am Director of the Bureau of Economic Research of the Republican Senatorial and Congressional Committee and I am attempting to do a job non-political in its nature and directed to what I believe the necessary accumulation of knowledge of the policies and measures of the present Administration and the interests of the American people. My personal relations with Administration officials are nil.

> Following is the statement "Sidney Brooks also is a member of the secret Order of '76. Before anyone can join he must, in his own handwriting, and sealed with his own fingerprints, give certain details of his life. Brooks' application to this espionage society appears with this article and shows that he is masquerading under his mother's maiden name. *His father is Col. Edwin Emerson, Hitler agent.*

The facsimile of my application to the Order of '76, reproduced in your magazine, is correct. May I repeat that my job is collecting information, whether it bear upon national economic, financial, industrial, or social conditions? Why I joined the Order of '76 is no one else's affair but my own, and I am not obligated to give reasons to anyone. But I can tell you if you are interested that my purpose was primarily informational and secondarily because that society was represented to me as standing for principles of American government in which I believe.

I have talked with Mr. Royal Scott Gulden on several occasions, the last being, I believe, although I cannot remember exactly, late in 1933. My talks with him were concerned with the spread of Communism in this country. My contacts with him were based upon my sincere disapproval of the importation of any foreign governmental experimentation into this country. I believe that the form of government framed by the original American colonists and developed in the American spirit is the form of government that we want. If people in Russia want Communism, it is the right of the Russian people to have what they want. I do not believe it to be our business to interfere in the affairs of Russia. I do not believe it is the business of any Russians, of whatever race, to interfere with our form of government.

I would just as emphatically say the same about the form of government in Germany. It is their business so long as they do not infringe on the rights or safety of American citizens. Because they did so infringe in the early part of 1917 I joined the American army, as indicated in the facsimile which you reproduce. In 1919 I was honorably discharged. As to the Hitler, or Nazi government, I feel the same as I do of the Russian government. I have little sympathy with it, and would wish to join in condemnation of its persecution of otherwise free citizens, including Jews.

I believe that any importation of Nazi principles or organizations into this country can only be provocative of useless strife, which is entirely foreign to our country, and which any earnest American should discourage.

As to Semitism or anti-Semitism, I do not believe that agitation one way or the other is either necessary or beneficial in the United States. Millions of people have come to this country for refuge against persecution. Every real American should try to uphold the principles which guarantee such protection.

> "Brooks' application . . . shows that he is masquerading under his mother's maiden name. *His father is Col. Edwin Emerson, Hitler agent.*"

I do not "masquerade" under any name. I

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Mr. Harry F. Sieber, Treasurer,
Silver Legion of America,
Asheville, N. C.

DEC 7 1933

Dear Mr. Sieber:

In response to yours addressed to R. L. Peterson on November 28, we can give you a price of sixty cents per copy in quantity lots of the "Protocols".

As for "Halt, Gentile! and Salute the Jew", same can be had at ten cents per copy, in quantity lots or fifteen cents apiece.

Very truly yours,

Harry A. Jung

Harry A. Jung
Honorary General Manager

HAJ/RP

435 No. Michigan Ave., R.2212

Evidence that this espionage organization to which wealthy Jews contributed, is engaged in distributing the "Protocols of Zion" and other anti-Semitic propaganda.

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adopted my mother's maiden name upon reaching majority, and all my friends and associates have known this ever since. Material prepared by myself bearing on this question appears in "Who's Who in America," Vol. 15 (1928-29). This is recognized as an entirely legal step which anyone is entitled to take for his own reasons.

My personal relations with my father, Edwin Emerson, are equally only our business. My relations with him are as father and son, and I have always had every reason to respect him as a loyal American.

My private life has no connection whatever with the Republican Senatorial and Congressional Committee or of any of its members. For my personal activities I am answerable only to them, and I must depend on my own honor to do nothing inimical to their interests. I endeavor to conduct research for that organization to the extent of my ability and with every honesty of purpose.

SIDNEY BROOKS.

[Mr. Brooks attached to his letter two affidavits, intended to show that he was in Washington on March 4, 1934, the date when Spivak said he was in New York conferring with Pelley of the Silver Shirts, and Gulden of the Order of '76.—THE EDITORS.]

Warring on War

JOSEPH NORTH

CHICAGO.

ONE million eight hundred thousand men and women sent the 3,332 delegates to the Second United States Congress Against War and Fascism. More than that. Although capitalism has ordained that the men in uniform be sequestered from their brothers—the civilians—the barracks were heard from. This is indeed an age of mutiny. All the starred and striped shibboleths cracked when a First Lieutenant of the United States Army, and several youths of the National Guard, stepped out of the mass, spoke swiftly in greeting, saluted, disappeared in the mass. The Sphinx had broken silence; it was on the side of the future.

The Second United States Congress Against War and Fascism in Chicago, September 28, 29, 30, occurred about a year after the first assemblage in New York. The rumble of war was louder; the Swastika's shadow fell over a greater portion of America. The danger signals of 1933 had been heeded; in 1933, 2,616 delegates representing less than a million had attended. In 1934 the delegates numbered 3,332. They represented 1,800,000.

Their presence in Chicago was a result of the World Congress Against War, called by Henri Barbusse in 1932. Held in Amsterdam, after Geneva and Paris had tabooed the meeting, 2,200 delegates came from 27 lands. They had been elected by 30 million people. They founded this movement, which today has sections in the major countries of the world, dedicated to the war upon war, and upon Fascism, its predecessor.

The American section was established as a result of the First United States Congress Against War and Fascism, held in New York last September. It immediately found a place in the American scene. The inherent strength of its program kept the organization intact when, as a result of the Madison Square Garden affair last February, a number of Socialists withdrew from the national leadership. Not only did it survive, but as the credentials' report of the Second Congress proves, it grew. Not only that. Last year nine Socialist delegates attended; this year 49. The official organ of the League, Fight, reached a circulation of 30,000.

Thousands of meetings, in union hall, on street-corner, in factory, college dormitory and township chapel, paved the way for this meeting. The delegates came because they felt that capitalism, reeling on the rocks, reeling to disaster in Germany, in Italy, in Japan, everywhere, is driving ahead to war, its last outpost. They all understood—for Europe is an unforgettable object lesson—that Fascism's advance means war's advance; that the crisis and crumbling of Fascism, already obvious, spurs on the drive to war. War is in every paper, in every headline; it galvanized into action wide strata of the populace.

As a result this Second Congress was startling in the diversity of its delegates. The extent of the united front can be gauged at a glance by a partial list of the speakers attending the sessions:

> Louis Perrigaud, secretary of the World Committee Against War and Fascism, one of the editors of Le Populaire, the French Socialist daily; Dr. Harry F. Ward, chairman of the American section of the organization, a professor at the Union Theological Seminary, secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Service and chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union; Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party; Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld, former Prussian Minister of Justice, a member of the Reichstag from 1918 to the time Hitler took power, a former member of the Social Democratic Party; General Victor A. Yakhontoff, former Czarist officer; Robert Morss Lovett, professor at the University of Chicago and president of the League for Industrial Democracy; Mrs. Victor Berger, widow of the prominent Socialist; Rabbi Benjamin Goldstein; Samuel Patterson, of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

Add to these notables, the longer list of rank and file workingmen and women from 35 states, some of them hiking across country to show the scars burned on their bodies by the California Vigilantes, forerunners of American Fascism, and you will realize the extent of this united front. The credential report is as exciting as a chart of the Second Five Year Plan. Here is a partial list:

343 from all types of trade unions
251 from various cultural, educational, middle-class organizations
434 from fraternal organizations (International Workers Order, Arbeiter Ring, Krankenkasse, etc.)
247 from defense, civil rights, anti-fascist organizations
25 from churches
22 directly from shops
41 from veterans' organizations
115 from various political parties—(Communist, Socialist, Jewish Workers Party, etc.)
55 from the farms
193 from anti-war and peace organizations
121 from women's organizations
154 from jobless groups

Most important of all groups—this was recognized by all attending the Congress—was that of the trade unions. Here lies the strength or weakness of the anti-war, anti-Fascist movement. An analysis of the trade union representation shows 121 from A.F. of L. locals and central organizations. Six delegates officially represented railroad brotherhoods; 150 from the various industrial unions; 78 from miscellaneous and independent unions.

WHY THEY CAME. They came because all their old illusions had been annihilated. Nobody need repeat to them the imminence of war; the imminence of war's forerunner, Fascism. As Professor Robert Morss Lovett wrote in the call to the Congress:

> There is no certain cure for war within a social order which is itself predatory and warlike. To repel any change in this social order, to prevent any mitigation of the exploitation of the workers who suffer under it, are the objects of Fascism. War and Fascism are thus linked inseparably together.

I thought of Dr. Lovett's statement when Thomas Sharpe, a member of the International Seamen's Union hobbled onto the stage, swathed in bandages. His right foot in a plaster cast, he leaned upon his crutches and spoke into the microphone. Here he was—a victim of American Hitlerism. During the West Coast longshoremen's strike, police and Vigilantes had captured him.

"He [the policeman] grabbed me by the arm and walked me across to the police car," he revealed. "As he shoved me into a hallway, holding my right arm, he hit me on the right shinbone. . . . I fell to the floor and every muscle in my body went limp. . . . He then grabbed my right foot and hit me eight or nine times, again and again on the same

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shinbone with the club. . . . Then he twisted the right foot until the bones he had splintered with his club cracked and came through the flesh, severing an artery . . ."

Here, standing before the delegates, was Fascism's handiwork. How many times Sharpe and his fellow-workers, and their allies of the middle-class, had been betrayed! Little wonder they had hitch-hiked, trundled across country in ramshackle Fords, freighted to the Congress. Thomas Sharpe symbolized the whole history of contemporary labor. He had been giving without stint of his labor power when the war broke out. Today, like millions of others, he saw the connection between present day war and the existing social system. He knew that there was no peace anywhere, nowhere in all the wide world. War after war had raged in the 16 years since The War had ended. Nameless millions had died or starved or been maimed in the 30 wars that had been fought in far-off lands: the wars of intervention against the Russian and Chinese peoples, the war in Manchuria, the incessant forays upon all the colonies — Nicaragua, Gran Chaco, French Indo-China, India, Syria, Arabia, Morocco. He knew the bookkeeping of the last World War; 10 million dead, 20 million maimed, millions destroyed by plague and starvation.

He had been one of those sold out to death when the leadership of the Second International in 1914 said to its 12 million members "Defend Your Fatherland." The war had begun because the imperialists were well prepared; the working-class helpless. Not because it did not see the portents of war. It did. How often it cried out to its leaders to organize against war. Consider: there had been Stuttgart in 1907; Copenhagen in 1910; Basle in 1912. The International Socialist Congress comprising all the Socialist Parties of Europe and the world had set forth its program. The Basle Manifesto began thus:

> If a war threatens to break out it is the duty of the working masses and their parliamentary representatives in the countries involved, supported by the co-ordinating activity of the International Socialist Bureau, to exert every effort in order to prevent the outbreak of war by the means they consider the most effective. . . . In case war should break out anyway it is their duty to intervene in favor of its speedy termination, and with all their power to utilize the economic and political crisis created by the war to arouse the people and thereby to hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule.

War came. And with it the greatest betrayal of all time. The leadership of the Second International advised its membership of 12 million to "defend" their "fatherlands."

Standing there on his crutches with his fist upraised, Sharpe had lived through all that. And this too. The endless peace talk of the past decade: all the flim-flam of disarmament. The illusion of the League of Nations; its merry-go-round of disarmament negotiations. The endless number of fervid perorations. The mountains of peace documents in all the archives. In 1928 war was outlawed by the Kellogg pact signed by 15 powers. In 1932 when 62 powers had affixed their solemn seals, war broke out in the Far East and Latin America. The peace talk at Geneva was drowned out by the exploding bombs of the Japanese airplanes over Chapei. And with them the peace promises of the bourgeois.

Then Article 8 of the Covenant was invoked: "national security." And Fellow Worker Sharpe saw that instead of creating the best security of war by general disarmament as the Soviet Union demanded, the imperialists brought about security against disarmament, an armed peace.

The October 7 issue of the New York Times put it this way:

> Recent events at the meeting of the League Assembly indicate that Europe has abandoned the idea of world disarmament on a large scale. The struggle over disarmament raises the question as to why man's warlike instincts persist despite the so-called refinements of civilization.

It was to reply to this question that the 3,336 delegates came to Chicago. Millions realized that another World War is on the program. Their faith in the Woodrow Wilsons of today has been blasted. They are weary of all the betrayals: of the MacDonalds, the Scheidemanns, the Hendersons, the Hilquits, all the turncoats of 1914. But 1934 is no 1914: the existence of the Third International, the Communist Parties everywhere (they had come into existence fighting the betrayal of the Second International leadership) had proved a powerful catalytic agent. Millions outside the party, outside even the working-class, were stirred, were learning from the Reds. They understood when the Reds said the world faces a new "round of wars and revolutions." When the Reds said, "Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital" all the Sharpes understood too.

WHAT THEY WILL DO. How does the American League plan to fight war and Fascism? In brief, this is what they will do:

1: Attempt, through demonstrations, picketing and strike, to halt the manufacture and transport of munitions.

2: Expose everywhere the widespread preparations for war carried on under the cloak of national recovery.

3: Demand all war funds to aid the jobless. Replace all such devices as the C.C.C. by a federal system of social insurance paid for by the government and employers.

4: Oppose the policies of American imperialism in the Far East, in Latin America, especially now in Cuba, and internationally; support the struggles of all colonial peoples against the imperialist policies of exploitation and armed suppression.

5: Support the peace policies of the Soviet Union for total and universal disarmament which today with the support of the masses in all lands constitute the clearest and most effective opposition to war throughout the world; oppose all attempts to weaken the Soviet Union whether these attempts take the form of misrepresentation and false propaganda, diplomatic maneuvering or intervention by imperialist governments.

6: Oppose all developments leading to Fascism in this country and abroad, and especially in Germany; oppose the increasingly widespread use of the armed forces against the workers, farmers, and the special terrorizing and suppression of Negroes in their attempts to maintain a decent standard of living; oppose the increasing encroachments upon the civil liberties of these groups as a growing fascisation of our allegedly "democratic" government.

7: Win the armed forces to the support of this program.

This is a minimum program: Sharpe agrees to it, his fellow workers of every political shading can agree to it; his allies in the middle-classes can endorse it.

That this was recognized at the Congress was evident in the action of the 49 Socialist delegates.

M. Perrigaud, the French socialist had spoken for united front.

Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld, the former Social democratic minister of justice, had spoken for united front.

Mrs. Victor Berger had spoken for united front.

Mrs. Helen Barr warned that unless we have united front now "we will have it in the concentration camps, and that is what we will deserve."

The 49 Socialists drew up a resolution. They demanded a united front. They sent it to their national leadership. Furthermore they demanded that no action be taken against those attending this Congress: expulsion faced them. They demanded their party affiliate with the League. They demanded recognition of the fact that they spoke the will of the Socialist rank-and-file. They demanded united front with the Communists and all fighting Fascism and war.

The capitalist newspapers in America paid scarcely any attention to the Congress. But millions will hear of it. The delegates will see to that. They left the Congress prepared to steam-shovel deep into the sub-soil of the American populace: to win the trade unionists and those in strategic war industries. They left the Congress convinced that the fight against Fascism is no combat to take place at some Horatio's Gate that afternoon when an American Hitler marches on Washington; it is a daily fight for the rights and liberties the working-class has wrested through the long embattled years.

I cannot forget the staccato phrases of the delegate from the armed forces, as he stood before the microphone, his face masked:

> The reserve officers of this area have worked out all the details of their mobilization plans . . . this Congress is our militant answer to these preparations . . . these are not preparations for an imperialist war alone . . . special equipment has been issued and troops at Fort Sheridan have been called out on riot duty . . . these troops can be brought into Chicago within one hour of call. . . . from this mighty demonstration we take new courage and we therefore resolve and pledge to this congress our support in the struggle against war and Fascism within the armed forces. . . . And if the capitalists call upon us to wage war, we shall wage war, but against the war makers.

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The Vanderbilts and the Rats

ROBERT FORSYTHE

I AM very much disappointed in the Vanderbilt girls. No more than a fortnight ago Harold was saving the honor of the nation by retaining America's Cup and now the girls must get into this fuss about Gloria. Not only is it Gloria but it is whether Gloria shall live with her aunt, Mrs. Whitney, or whether she shall live with her mother and the rats. I make no oblique reference to A.F. of L. officialdom; I mean rats.

Harold had his troubles with the Hon. T. O. M. Sopwith, but this was only a slight misunderstanding between two amateur gentlemen who were accusing each other in a genteel way of being crooks and sharpers. The Hon. Mr. Sopwith finally departed with the statement that not only was he gypped during the course of the disputed race but that Mr. Vanderbilt had not built his boat in accordance with the rules. From a superficial view it might be lamented that amateur gentlemen should speak of each other in this manner, but it might be set down as a show of spirit quite fitting for those ordained by the heavenly powers to rule.

Now Dizzy Dean would get no mercy from the populace if he were caught polishing up the ball with emery paper, but that is because Mr. Dean is not a gentleman in the approved sense. The one supreme virtue of being a gentleman is that no one can question your golf score.

The affair of Gloria and the Vanderbilt girls is rather complicated. What is definitely known is that Mrs. Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt has a daughter of ten also named Gloria. It seems there are various members of the family who do not feel that Mama Gloria is a fit person to raise Gloria. They contend that Mama Gloria does not take proper care of the child and furthermore that she drinks a great deal and is given to sitting around in her nightie with married gentlemen and is not careful enough about the rats. For that reason the court is being asked to turn Gloria's upbringing over to her aunt, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney. The whole affair, I must admit, has shocked me. Not only have I a pathological abhorrence of furry animals but I had hoped for better things from the Vanderbilts.

It has been testified at the trial by two maids in the Vanderbilt house in Paris that Gloria was pushed off into an attic room which was overrun by rats and fed so badly and neglected so completely that dire results to her health were apparent. It has also been charged that Mrs. Vanderbilt was much too friendly with Prince Gottfried zu Hohenlohe and Lady Milford Haven. The Vanderbilt family is split over the matter. Mrs. Vanderbilt's mother has joined Mrs. Whitney in asking that the child be taken from its mother. Mrs. Gloria Vanderbilt is supported by her sister, Mrs. Consuelo Thaw and Lady Furness.

Whatever else may be said for the case, it has been a godsend for Bruno R. Hauptmann. When the maids began to get into the rich details of the Paris love nest, the tabloids practically threw the Lindbergh case into the alley. If the Daily News can get a picture of Mrs. Vanderbilt *flagranto delicto* in her nightie, Mr. Hauptmann will be so completely forgotten that his trial may be held in the Yankee Stadium with nobody present but the judge, the jury and nine bail bond gentlemen.

I must confess that the affair has cut me to the heart. I have been an admirer of the Vanderbilts for many years, starting with Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., and if anything should happen to the theory that there are those who are destined to rule and others who are destined to be slaves, I shall not recover easily.

It was all very well for Mrs. Gloria Vanderbilt to have a nip with her afternoon tea and she might even be excused for entertaining company in her shift but the least she might have done, I think, is get a trap for the rats. If it should come out later that the rats were in reality tame white mice there will be no man in the world more relieved than I am. Furthermore, I am sure that if rats did overrun little Gloria's attic room, they were a polite gentlemanly breed acting quite in harmony with the dignified household descending from the old pirate known as Commodore Van Derbilt.

The rich are remarkable people and the fact that John Jacob Astor, the third, may see fit to kick his new wife into a taxi is certainly no excuse for general laxity among the masses. High spiritedness is a characteristic of people of quality and attempts to make them conform to the ordinary standards of decency can only lead to results which will be bad for the human race. If Mrs. Finley Shepherd, the former Helen Gould, wishes to give Gaston B. Means $50,000 to protect her from the Reds, it may be accepted as an idiosyncracy of the good lady which can only have a happy outcome. It makes Mr. Means happy and it gives Mrs. Shepherd a purpose in life and it makes the Reds wonder who Mrs. Shepherd can possibly be. The long arm of coincidence is apparent in circumstances affecting the wealthy and one would hesitate before ruling out the possibility of heavenly guidance in these matters.

For instance, Mr. Means also had contacts with Mrs. Edward B. McLean in the Lindbergh kidnaping case. Always anxious to assist in an emergency Mr. Means took $50,000 of the McLean money with the ostensible purpose of supplying the ransom and securing the return of the baby. The fact that he inadvertently appropriated the money to his own uses is incidental to the theme. The important thing is that Mrs. McLean lost her $50,000 and Soviet Russia lost a thrill. With that much capital she could have bought another jewel of such magnificence that Moscow would have been unable to withstand the shock and the Kremlin would have fallen. On such minor accidents do the fate of empires hang.

It is well established that the poor are poor because they prefer it and the rich are rich because they expect it. There are radical writers who seek to make capital of the fact that the elder Astor was a fur merchant and the elder Vanderbilt ran the ferry to Staten Island, but it is plain to anyone who cares to examine the matter that Mr. Astor and Mr. Vanderbilt were representatives of lines extending back to Charlemagne. That they should have forsaken the life of ease to go into the wilds of Staten Island and Astoria is surely a credit to their fortitude and their manly bearing.

It has been contended that the flower of St. Petersburg aristocracy has not held up well under adversity, but this is obviously a canard intended to embarrass those who are sent by God to govern us. The idea that a Russian emigré might be in bad straits is far-fetched for the simple reason that in the very worst circumstances he can write a book entitled *My Escape from the Collective* or *How I Thwarted the Cossacks*. If he is living in America and has been here since 1918 and was only two months old when he arrived, he will be unable, because of the high sense of ethics common to White Russians, to write about his escape from the Soviets, but there is another subject open to him which will make him a millionaire. He has only to write of his escape from Stewart's without paying the check to find himself a best seller and a world hero.

I insist that these insinuations about the rich must stop. When I hear agitators talking about the cruelty of wealth I have only to think of Mr. Morgan giving up an hour of his evening to speaking over the radio on behalf of block-aid relief to realize how ungrateful the masses can be.

Some people may be amused by the troubles of the Vanderbilts, but I am not to be counted among them. If these fine people are to be dragged through the mire along with their inner secrets, their prides and their rats, I don't know how I'm to bear it. If I should ever hear that Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., has been caught syphoning gas out of a parked car, it will be the end for me.

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The Saar—Powder Keg of Europe

HAROLD WARD

SEVEN HUNDRED-ODD square miles of concentrated industrial wealth and political dynamite, cutting out a jig-saw piece between the France of Schneider, the de Wendels and Doumergue and the Germany of Thyssen, Krupp and Hitler—that is the Saar Basin. Today, after fifteen years of "neutrality" by the grace of Versailles, and within three months of the plebiscite which will decide nothing but the next move on the chessboard of world imperialism, this most densely populated area in Europe (over 1,000 inhabitants per square mile, more than that of Holland, Belgium or Japan) is seething with unrest, fear, the bitterness engendered in a fundamentally peace-loving folk by intense economic and nationalist rivalries.

Cut through the steadily increasing barrage of propaganda, demonstrations, demagogy, riots and disorders which the League's Governing Commission, under Geoffrey G. Knox, exposes but cannot—or will not?—stop. It is a secret only to the deaf and the blind that this barrage is inspired from Berlin, and is laid down by the camouflaged Nazi "Deutsche Front." This powerful terrorist organization numbers close to half a million members in the Saar (of whom 16,000 are reported to have been secretly armed by the Reich); it is in constant contact with every political and economic sector in Germany, from which it receives full, if carefully disguised support in its policy of intimidation, boycott and anti-semitism. A recently discovered auxiliary, the "Voluntary Labor Front" has been shown, by incriminating documentary evidence (volubly challenged in Berlin) to be planning the conscription of 10,000 young Saarlanders into the cruel Labor Camps in Germany, to be kept there (at an estimated total cost of about $5,000,000) at least until after the plebiscite. Add that membership in the German Front is very effectively managed, both centrally and locally: the employed pay one franc and the unemployed 10 centimes a month; additional strength comes from close if unofficial cooperation with the Christian trade unions (Deutsche Gewerkschaftsfront): the same groups which in Germany and Austria played the role of Judas to the revolutionary uprisings there.

Behind this actively fascist organization, directing all its movements with a calculating ruthlessness is—to quote Dorothy Thompson—"an imposing-looking man, with saber cuts across one cheek and a dimple in the other." This man is Hermann Roechling, bitterest enemy of the powerful French industrial interests in the Saar, which today control the bulk of all heavy industries, under the leadership of such men as Schneider and the steel masters Laurent and Dilling, of the "Forges et Aciéries" combine. Nevertheless, Roechling is the virtual ruler of Saarbruecken and its half million inhabitants; he owns and operates plants for the manufacture of synthetic fertilizer, to say nothing of great iron and steel mills. Constantly maneuvering for the overthrow of French monopoly capital (whose Saar investments are of the order of two billion francs), with no other objectives than the restoration, on a still higher level of concentration, of German pre-war industrial supremacy, Herman Roechling employs all means, from newspapers and the radio to the secret police and acts of provocation, to inspire the tormented Saarlanders with an undying love for the butcher of Bavaria and the puppet-Caesar who, on June 30, crossed another Rubicon of blood.

Much is made of the fact that "historically" the Saar is German (French political control has lasted for a period of only 22 years in all) and its population overwhelming German Catholic. From this it is concluded: first, that the Saar's "destiny" is not only a German affair (which might pass), but a Nazi-German one, which is chauvinistic nonsense; and second, that the Saarlanders, being "good-Catholics" are, and must remain, bad revolutionaries. The answer to both of these assumptions was given recently in the city of Sulzbach, where 80,000 Socialists, Communists and Catholics met in a stirring "united front" demonstration against Hitler and in favor of the official Communist line: the *status quo*. When a Catholic priest speaks to a great audience on the invitation of a Communist leader, and lays down a program of "liberation" from a tyrannical and vicious regime: that may not be a *proletarian* revolution, but it is the sort of incident out of which, multiplied a millionfold in all parts of a world tobogganing to chaos on the runway tumbrils of Imperialism —*such a revolution* will eventually come. Moreover, as a direct result of Nazi violence and provocation, especially since June 30, the number of Saarlanders in favor of the *status quo* has been estimated, by a responsible Nazi official, to have increased from 20 to 40, possibly even 50 percent of the total voting population. As it is known that a secret organization, German-recruited and drilled—the "Saar Legion"—is preparing for the worst, even if it leads to another Austrian *putsch* or to plain civil war, the extreme tension of European powers regarding the plebiscite is easily understood. Another Sarajevo is on the agenda of War.

The fact that the French government is officially resigned to the loss of her political chances in the Saar may qualify but it does not reduce the danger. Since 1919 the closely monopolized iron and steel industries of Lorraine (geologically integrated with the disputed territory) have consumed 174,000,000 tons of Saar coal—mined by German workers employed by the French state, paid in French currency and living under French customs. This is necessarily at the expense of the German heavy industries concentrated on the Ruhr: in 1933, for example, of some 9,000,000 tons of Saar coal (a mere fraction of the amount possible under intensive rationalization), nearly 4,000,000 went to French steel barons and consumers, and less than a million tons to an increasingly embittered Germany. Note also: the Saar mines now under French control are conservatively valued at $100,000,000, and must be repurchased by an economically crippled Reich in the event of a restoration vote; France currently absorbs nearly 50 percent of the Saar's miscellaneous production, very moderate amounts of the remainder being consumed in Germany; French exports to the Saar have increased in value from 365,000,000 francs in 1922 to 1,500,000,000 francs in 1932 (over two billion francs in 1927, at the height of "prosperity"): this is at a rate of nearly 1,000,000,000 francs a year, shared between some 20,000 French business undertakings, and giving this vest-pocket country fourth place among France's foreign customers.

It is obvious that Germany, whose financial structure is crumbling, whose industrial and economic life is maintained only by systematic transfusions of the life-blood of her workers, whose politics is one of domestic mass-starvation and foreign mass-conquest, both in the interests of monopoly-capital—it is quite obvious that the masters of this Germany will balk at absolutely nothing to obtain the "legal" right to mercilessly exploit—every resource, natural and human, to be found in that jagged, intensely productive fragment of earth, the Saar Basin. A German "victory" in the coming plebiscite is not merely desirable; it is *obligatory* upon a government which is slowly but with ominous finality losing all hold upon that voluntary *and organized* mass-support which alone can perpetuate it. First, in order to distract internal and foreign criticism of its regime by a political "adventure" which produces an illusion of German solidarity, thus restoring her faded credit—and furthering the international growth of Fascism. Second, to possess itself of new productive forces and raw material supplies, to stimulate its feverish war industries and favor that "dynamic of power" so brilliantly analyzed by Ernst Henri. Third, to destroy a dangerous storm center of Marxism and revolutionary activities, as a further step in the fulfillment of the Rosenberg plan. Fourth (but by no means least), by destroying the *status quo* Germany eliminates the hated influence of the League of Nations—in whose decisions, from now on, the Soviet Union will play an increasing part.

To sum up: the Saar is today a perfect field laboratory for the study, in their most concentrated forms, of those two colossal and opposed social forces: the working-class and monopoly capital.

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A Pageant of Soviet Literature

The All-Union Writers' Congress in Moscow

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

THERE is a village on the Volga, called Gorodnya, with a population of 1,072. In preparation for the Writers' Congress, a meeting of the village was held to discuss problems of literature. Sholokhov's *Broken Virgin Soil,* a novel depicting the struggle for the collectivization of agriculture, was taken up. One hundred and twenty-seven peasants asked for the floor. They had all read the novel. They had ideas to express about literature in relation to their lives.

For months before the Congress, the problems of literature were discussed over the length and breadth of the Soviet land. Shops and mines, collective farms and schools, Red Army units and learned societies, nuclei of the Communist Party and committees of the labor unions—all held meetings and conferences on literature. The great mass of the Soviet readers, millions of them, expressed their appreciation of their authors, criticized shortcomings, formulated demands. Books were on exhibition at every gathering; selected lists of authors were circulated to help the readers find their way in the vigorously growing forests of young Soviet literature. Books were bought and avidly read. Bookstores and libraries could not live up to the rapidly growing demand.

In Leningrad, in the Palace of Labor, the writer was present at a get-together of the Communist Party *active* of the Vasileostrovsky Borough with the Leningrad writers. There were present a few hundred Communist functionaries and a dozen novelists and poets. There was a report, then discussion, then the writers gave brief accounts of their present work, their plans for the future, and read some of their most recent productions. There was a complete "fraternization" of the "laymen" with the writers.

In Moscow the writer was present at a meeting of the shock brigaders of Krasnopresnensky Borough called to discuss literature in connection with the writers' Congress soon to open. A representative of the Borough Committee gave a talk on the subject of "What the workers must expect of literature and what the shock brigaders can do for the writers." In clear and precise language the speaker, himself a worker, stressed the necessity of *truth* in literary presentation. We workers, he said, must be shown the facts of life *as they are.* The writer must not paint the enemy all black and the revolutionists all white. Show us even the agony of a *kulak* when he loses his foothold in life. Our truth is too great to need embellishment. The *kulak* may weep bitter tears, but what are his tears in comparison with the great structure of socialist happiness that is being built by the dictatorship of the proletariat? The speaker then stressed the necessity of *optimism.* "There was a time," he said, "when the bourgeoisie as a young class was also optimistic. Now as a doomed class it cannot look into the future. We, the working class that is building a new life, demand the creation of a literature saturated with the joy of life, with the pride of conquest."

In a suburb of Moscow the writer was present at a meeting of young proletarian writers held as a mobilization for the writers' congress. Men and women working in the shops devote their spare time to writing poems and stories. They work under the leadership of more experienced writers. They gathered to read their new creations and to listen to the criticism of their fellow workers who filled the hall.

Literature was placed in the very center of the social life of the Soviet. Local conferences and district conferences of writers. Conferences of the writers of the minority nationalities up to the remotest corners of the frozen Northeast. Extensive press reports. Press discussion of literature on a wide scale. Interviews with writers. Comment on resolutions. Streams of new books poured into the never saturated market . . .

Nowhere in the history of the world can a similar phenomenon be recorded. A country of 170 millions making literature the prime object of its attention. Tremendous masses of the working population delving into the questions of literary creativeness as if they were the essence of their own lives. Authors discussed with passion. Books bought and read by the million. Interest in the classics stimulated enormously. Comparisons drawn between the great mastery of Pushkin and Gogol, Dostoievsky and Leo Tolstoy, Turgenev and Chekhov—and that of Leonov, Sobolev, Gladkov, Sholokhov, Alexei Tolstoi, Ehrenbourg, Katayev, Avdeyenko, Yasensky.

B. SLAVIN
Author of the popular stage hit *Intervention*

Red flags wave over Moscow. Red strips of cloth are drawn across the most populous streets of the Red capital. Large portraits of writers adorn the walls of buildings and the show windows of many stores. Slogans on literature shout at the passer-by everywhere. Newsstands display special editions and papers and magazines devoted to the Writers' Congress. The utterances of the leaders on literature and writers decorate numberless posters.

> This will be a free literature because neither the selfish profit motive nor that of career but the idea of Socialism and sympathy for the toilers will recruit ever new forces into its ranks.—*Lenin on proletarian literature.*

> The truth of the future is simple and clear. A writer who is a proletarian must make simplicity, clarity, vividness his aim.—*Gorky.*

> Proletarian in content, national in form—such is the all-humanity culture towards which Socialism is advancing.—*Stalin.*

> We need engineers who build blast furnaces; we need engineers who build automobiles, tractors. No less do we need engineers who build the human soul; you writers are the engineers who build the human soul.—*Stalin.*

Under this slogan of the writers being the engineers of the human soul, of their work being destined to shape the new man in a new society, the historical pageant of revolutionary literature will unfold its marvelous scenes.

The Hall of Columns of the House of the Unions is a great jewel-box glinting with red. The famous white columns lend a beautiful contrast to the huge red banner unfurling over a marble bust of Lenin, while the numerous golden lights give the hall an unmatched air of festivity. Against this background, the crayon portraits of the classics of world and Russian literature look austere. Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Heine, Pushkin, Gogol, Chernishevsky, Nekrasov, Belinsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov. In the front, over Lenin's bust, large portraits of Stalin and Gorky.

The hall is jammed. The galleries are full to capacity. The hall can seat no more than 2,500. There are hundreds of thousands of

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workers in Moscow who would wish nothing better than to be present at this gathering. Large crowds of them have assembled in front of the building. They will wait till late in the evening to catch a glimpse of their writers leaving the meeting. The radio will transmit the proceedings of the congress to every corner of the country, and eager listeners will cluster around the loud speakers with more avidity than the crowds of American fans listening to the report of a baseball score.

These are great days in Moscow. These are momentous days throughout the country. The first All-Union Congress of Writers.

VERA INBER
Poet, novelist and short story writer

Gorky looks surprisingly young for his sixty-six years. His shock of dark hair is hardly touched with gray. His drooping mustache is all brown. He has a young carriage. And that marvelous look in his eyes! A father? Yes, he is the father of proletarian literature in Russia. But somehow you do not connect him with the idea of the passing of time. He seems timeless. He is as much the storm-bird of the world revolution today as he was thirty-three years ago, when he hurled into the capitalist world, into the darkness of Czarist Russia, his challenging songs of revolt. He is more for the vastly developed Soviet literature of today than he was twenty years ago for the first beginnings of proletarian literature which he encouraged, directed and fostered. He himself is the symbol of the hurricane-like tempo of our times: he saw and fought the darkest of the dark of old Russia; he stands now illuminated with the brilliant light of a new Socialist life which he helps to perfect.

He is not only respected and revered; he is loved. He is brother, teacher, counselor, advisor to every new Russian writer. He devotes his giant abilities to the building up of the new Soviet culture.

Gorky:

The significance of our Congress consists in this, that the multinational, multilingual literature of all our republics steps forth as one single whole before the face of the proletariat of the land of the Soviets, before the face of the revolutionary proletariat of all countries, and before the face of the writers of the whole world who are friendly to us.

We step forth demonstrating not only our geographical unification, but demonstrating the unity of our aim, which, naturally, does not deny, does not hamper the multiplicity of our creative methods and tendencies.

We step forth at a time when the bourgeoisie generally is becoming savage, bestial and despairing, its despair being caused by the consciousness of its ideological impotence, its social bankruptcy, in an epoch when it makes bloody attempts to return by way of Fascism to the bigotry of feudal middle ages.

We step forth as the *judges* of a world that is doomed to ruin and as people who assert the real humanism of the revolutionary proletariat, the humanism of a power that is destined by history to free the whole world of the toilers from envy, greed, vulgarity, foolishness, from all deformities which through ages have crippled the men of labor. We are the enemies of private property, that horrible and mean goddess of the bourgeois world, we are the enemies of zoological individualism which is being asserted by the religion of that goddess.

We step forth in a country where the proletariat and the peasantry, led by the Party of Lenin, have conquered the right to develop all their abilities and gifts and where the workers and kolkhozniks prove every day in various ways their ability to use this right.

We step forth in a country which is illuminated by the genius of Vladimir Lenin, in a country where, untiringly and marvelously, there works the iron will of Joseph Stalin.

It is our aim to organize the literature as a single cultural revolutionary power.

Soviet literature emerged from the Congress as one single cultural revolutionary power. The Congress accomplished the gigantic work of welding Soviet literature into one mighty force. There lies its historic importance.

Zhdanov, secretary of the Communist Party U.S.S.R., speaking for the Central Committee of the Party and for the Council of Peoples' Commissars:

Of what can the bourgeois writer write, of what can he dream, of what pathos can he think, where can he get the inspiration at a time when the worker in the capitalist countries is uncertain of tomorrow, when he does not know whether he will work tomorrow, when the peasant does not know whether he will work tomorrow on his patch of land or he will be beaten off the track by the capitalist crisis, when the toiling intellectual has no work today and does not know whether he will get it tomorrow.

Of what can the bourgeois writer write, of what pathos can one speak at a time when the world will soon be plunged again into the maelstrom of the imperialist war.

The present situation of the bourgeois writer is such that he can no more create great works. The decline and decay of bourgeois literature which flow from the decline and decay of the capitalist system are a characteristic feature, a characteristic peculiarity of bourgeois culture and bourgeois literature at the present time.

The proletariat of the capitalist countries is already forging its own army of writers, its own artists, the representatives of whom we are glad to greet today at the first congress of Soviet writers. The detachment of revolutionary writers in the capitalist countries is not yet large, but it is expanding and will expand with every day in which the class struggle is sharpening, in which the forces of the world proletarian revolution are growing.

A. AFINOGENOV
Author of *Fear* and other plays popular on the Soviet stage.

Such is the situation in the capitalist countries. Different is it with us. Our Soviet writer draws material for his artistic works, the subject matter, the images, the artistic word and speech from the life and experience of the people of Dneprostroy, Magnitostroy. Our writer draws his material from the heroic epic of the Cheluskinites, from the experience of our collective farms, from the creative activities that are seething in every corner of our country.

In our country the main heroes of a literary work are the active builders of the new life: working men and working women, collective farmers, men and women, party members, organizers of economic life, engineers, Komsomols, Pioneers. These are the fundamental types and the fundamental heroes of our Soviet literature. Our literature is saturated with enthusiasm and with a spirit of heroism. It is optimistic in principle because it is the literature of the rising class, the proletariat, which is the only progressive and forward-looking class. Our Soviet literature is strong by the fact that it serves a new cause—the cause of building Socialism.

The leading reports, the speeches of the delegates, the greetings of the guests, the untiring discussions in the lobby, the numberless articles and theses in the press—all stress the leading ideas of this Congress which have become the leading ideas of Soviet literature as a whole. As a writer, an engineer of the human soul, you must know life, reality—intimately, closely, and at first hand. You must be able to represent it not as a copyist, not "objectively," but in its revolutionary development and as a participant in the processes of life. You must be truthful; you must not distort reality; you must show its major

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trends of development; but this you cannot do unless you are equipped with theoretical knowledge, unless you view society and life in the light of the theory of the proletariat, which is the theory of Marx—Engels—Lenin—Stalin. You must write not because you want to be a "mirror," a "camera," but because you want to be an active moulder of life, and that means—as far as your medium is concerned—a moulder of human character, a forger of human will. In brief: you must make it your task to reshape, reeducate the toilers in the spirit of Socialism. Thus your realism becomes Socialist realism. But at the same time you are not at all averse to romanticism. It all depends upon what romanticism you pursue. The romanticism that depicts non-existing people in a non-existing world, a romanticism that glosses over the contradictions and horrors of capitalist society, is serving the bourgeoisie to lull it into a false feeling of security before its doom. A romanticism that forecasts the future, that sees the outlines of a future beautiful life in the present struggles of the worker, a romanticism which combines a sober attitude towards the present with an understanding of the tremendous changes in life and the human personality that will take place under proletarian rule, is *revolutionary* romanticism and as such ought to be part of the creativeness of the revolutionary writers. This brings us to the ideas of *optimism* and *heroism* in revolutionary literature.

The literature of a class that is forging ahead to a new life is of necessity optimistic. The struggles of this class, both by way of destroying the old system and of building a new one, is of necessity saturated with heroism. The Soviet reality has already advanced numberless heroes who must be shown by the writers. But they have to be shown *artistically*. You cannot be a good electrical engineer without knowing the technique of producing electrical appliances. You cannot be an engineer of the human soul without mastering the technique of literary work. In the very same way as in the realm of the production of goods the slogan is: "Quality!", so in the realm of literature the demand is *for higher artistic quality*. Creations of high artistic mastery, of high ideological and artistic contents—this is the task which the Congress has put before the writers.

Like an ocean beating against an island, the endless mass of readers beat upon the House of the Unions with wave after wave of delegations. The delegations literally swamped the Congress. Some writers had anticipated it to be a sober and businesslike discussion of the problems of literature, with special attention to the methods of creative work. It could be neither sober nor businesslike. The whole congress was continually drunk with joy. The well prepared speeches on literary technique were continually interrupted by invasions of representatives of the masses who brought with them their tremendous enthusiasm, their vigor, their well organized aggressiveness, their unbounded faith in

S. DINAMOV
Soviet critic and authority on drama.

what the writers can do. Under the impact of these masses some of the writers for the first time awakened to the realization of what they mean, of what their work means for millions and millions. It was like a powerful hand lifting the congress delegates high up on a plane from which unusual vistas unfold. It made the Congress dizzy. It poured into it streams of energy which *must* result in magnificent artistic works on a new basis.

In they came, delegation after delegation. The Young Pioneers marched in, in well trained platoons, stepped up to the platform, handed Gorky a bouquet of flowers (he took it from the hands of two tiny girls who looked up at him admiringly, and a tear dropped from his eyes on the red rose), saluted the Congress with a Pioneer salute and, through their speaker, presented their demands. Oh, those kids know perfectly well what they want. They have discussed these questions more than once in their camps, they have formulated a number of salient points. They know that their presentation will be effective because they see in the hall their beloved authors: Marshak, Chukovsky, Ilin and many others. They want more books and good books that tell about the Civil War and the Red Army, and the Cheluskinites, and the great inventors, and the great heroes, and the great discoverers, and the wonderful children that were doing great work. And they do not want small books either, because you just start reading and you are soon through. They want fat books with many hundreds of pages which they can read many days in succession. And the books should be *interesting*. They do not want boresome books and they do not want books that look upon you as stupid fools who have to be continually admonished to see what they are shown. The fact is that when the kids are shown something good they can see it by themselves.

A tremendous discussion was going on among the children in the months preceding the Congress. Gorky had requested the children of the U.S.S.R. to write to him about what they read and what they want in the realm of literature. He received scores of thousands of letters which were carefully classified and listed. There has never been such closeness between the young generation and the writers.

Bugles sound. A sharp military command cuts the air. We do not see the guests as yet, but the hall is reverberating with heavy footsteps marching in time. The doors swing open. The Red Army marches in. Red banners borne aloft. Sun-tanned arms lifted in salute. In rows of four they march through the aisles. Their spokesman ascends the rostrum. He is a young man in his twenties, tall, lithe, vigorous. He makes a clear speech full of dignity and is listened to by the writers with tense interest. The Red Army thinks that Soviet literature is not doing justice to the armed fighter. True, the Red Army of the Civil War period has been repeatedly depicted in Soviet literature. But the Red fighter of today is not adequately represented. The Red Army reads the Soviet authors with love and admiration. The libraries of the Red Army with their millions of volumes are hardly able to satisfy the demands of the Red Army men. The Soviet writers must remember that the Red Army will be in the front ranks in case of an attack on our Soviet fatherland. The Soviet writers can make the Red Army men better fighters, better builders of Socialism.

The hall is delirious with enthusiasm. The Red Army delegation sings a brief song. Exclamations, cries of joy threaten to lift the roof of the hall. When the command is given to leave and the fighters turn around with a brisk precise movement, they are showered with flowers.

The proletariat is here. It has come in the shape of delegations of shock brigaders from the Donbass, from the "Hammer and Sickle," "Electrozavod," the Roller Bearer Plant, the Moscow subway under construction, the aviation plants. They are the advance guard of millions of readers. They are taking an active interest in the processes of literary development.

Said Comrade Arkhangelsky, representing the aviation plant:

> The writers must remember that they are not simply engineers of the human soul, but that they are engineers of strong, proletarian, Bolshevik souls. The writers have so far failed to reflect in literature the most advanced and the largest industrial units of the country. In particular have they failed to depict that strenuous tremendous work which was carried out by the Party in creating the powerful Soviet aviation.

Said Comrade Gurova, a middle aged woman representing the workers of the Trechgornaya textile mills:

> You cannot get along without us. This is a fact. But you also must know that we workers *cannot get along without you. It is therefore* best that we work together.

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In the course of her speech Gurova, instead of saying "Comrade writers," said "Comrade fellow workers." She immediately excused herself for this slip of the tongue, and the ovation she got for her "slip" was certainly a surprise to her.

The marines are not missing. The marines of the reserve, those that fought in the Civil War, have sent a delegation. Their speaker recalls how on the Antonov front the marines quickly "sent the band of Vaska Karas to the devil's mother." The fighters went into action right after they listened to a poem by Kirillov

F. GLADKOV
Author of the industrial novels *Cement* and *Power*

which the poet read to them in person. Kirillov went into battle among the fighters.

The Revolutionary Military Council of the Naval Forces of the Baltic Sea in a message to the Congress:

> Together with the whole country, the commanders and the Red Fleet men of the Red Banner Baltic Navy have taken the proudest part in preparing the Congress. With care and love they follow your work which is intended to create colorful and absorbing artistic works worthy of our admirable epoch, our great country and its able new people.
>
> The literary group of the Red Fleet has raised its first new contingent of Soviet literature. We prepare for you a new contingent. It shall be. This is guaranteed by the tremendous cultural upswing which has embraced the ranks of the Red Fleet as it embraces our entire country which is building the most advanced culture in the world.

Enter the collective farmers. They bring with them sheaves of newly cut corn, the fruit of their labor. They mount the platform—rugged individuals, some of them young, some age-bitten. They wear their best holiday clothes which can not conceal the coarseness of their hands and the awkwardness of their movements. They too have discussed literature. They too have formulated their demands. They speak what is felt by millions of Russian peasants now awakened to new life. With bated breath the congress listens to the peasant woman Smirnova. She is not overmodest, that strong-featured energetic woman with the metallic voice. She tells the Congress how a few years ago she was entirely illiterate. Now she is the chairman of a collective farm—"and that is almost as much as director of a factory." She has children for whom the proletarian revolution opened marvellous roads in life. She belongs to those women who had to fight for their equality with the men. There was a time when the husbands beat their wives in the villages. The Russian land was soaked with women's tears. It was not without struggle that equality was established on the land. This was made possible only through the collectivization of agriculture. Today the women are free. But they find that they are not adequately represented in the works of the Russian writers. "Comrade writers," says Smirnova, "I do not mean any offense when I tell you that your work is not so good in very many of your books. You have not told the story of the woman shock-brigader in the collective farm. Don't you remember what Comrade Stalin said, that the woman is a great power? You forget us. I have a definite proposal. You writers take the protectorate over our collective farm. Let us work together, each in his own field. I see here among you the writer who wrote *Bark Moccasins* and made horrible mistakes. Let him come to us, let him see how we live and let him describe it. Let him take the protectorate over the women."

The speech of Comrade Smirnova is saturated with humor. She is bitter. She is sarcastic. But the congress is not offended. On the contrary, her speech is greeted with a momentous ovation.

From far off Siberia the young miners of Kuzbass, gathered at a conference, wire to the president of the Congress, Maxim Gorky:

> We are very proud of the fact that our conference has coincided with the days of the writers' congress. We have selected you as a member of the presidium of our conference. We, the young men of the Kuzbass, got together to discuss how to turn our Kuzbass into a world source of coal supply. We wish to create a situation where the word *miner* is pronounced in our country in the same way as the words *flier, diver*. We are related to the conquerors of the air and the water by our struggle against elemental forces of nature. . . . There was a time when the miner was considered the most backward worker. Labor in the mine, we are told by old men, was degrading. Do we have to tell this to you, Maksimych! Quite different is the situation at present. It is easy and it is a joy to work at our Socialist, highly mechanized mine. We, the underground workers, wish to equal as quickly as possible the fliers and the divers, *and a good book about this is an excellent friend and comrade.* A book is a great power; it takes the place of the pick and shovel when we remove the mountains of old rubbish, the remnants of the uncultured times.
>
> Transmit, Alexei Maksimovitch, our brotherly greeting to the delegate writers, our great friends and beloved authors; transmit to them our request: "Come to the Kuzbass—tell us about your Congress, tell us what you will be working on."

For the heroes of the air and water, Professor Otto Schmidt greeted the Congress. Schmidt is a geologist, an arctic explorer, but his speech is a valuable contribution to the understanding of the problems of literature. He recites the fact that the members of the Cheluskin expedition, stranded on the arctic ice floes, read literary works with a burning interest. Every evening Bayevsky, Schmidt's assistant, an excellent reader, gathered members of the expedition to his tent and read aloud the poems of Pushkin.

> Pushkin had no direct bearing upon the Arctic, but the exceptional quality of the Pushkin verse heightened the perceptions of life to such an extent that it worked better than any direct propaganda. It is remarkable that on the ice a number of comrades began to write for the first time in their lives. The great experience that fell to their lot forced them to write diaries, to compose sketches and poems. I recall how once the poem of Lakhuiti, printed in the Pravda, was transmitted to us by radio. The poem connected the Cheluskin tragedy with the coming of Comrade Dimitrov to Moscow. This short poem played a tremendous organizing role. For the first time the word "heroism" was used there. This had an enormous influence on the minds of many members of the collective. "I am a hero, this imposes obligations, this means that we must work excellently."

Schmidt mentions the concentrated love experienced by the Cheluskinites upon their return. This concentration of emotion, he says, ought to be used in literary work. "One can take Cheluskin, one can take any new construction, one can take any collective farm and depict them so vividly as to create a concentrated image, to create those traits which are so characteristic for our land of building Socialism.

"To show the growth of people—this is one of the greatest and most thankful themes. It is necessary to show this growth as an interaction between the individual and the collective, to show that only under the conditions of collective life is the blossoming up of the individual possible.

M. SHOLOKHOV
Author of the recent novel *All Quiet Flows the Don*

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"As a scientific worker I wish to emphasize that the best expression of pure science is observable where there is the unity of theory and practice. The same holds true about the realm of art. The strongest art image, the strongest work grow on the soil of depicting our marvelous, magnificent reality."

It is not a *Russian* congress. It is a congress of all the literatures of the Soviet Union. It is a congress of all languages, all cultures. An extensive report has been given on the literature of the Ukraine, the literature of White Russia, the literature of Georgia, the literature of Armenia, the literature of the Jews, the literature of Uzbekistan, the literature of the Tartars. Many languages—one class. Different surroundings, different historical backgrounds—one aim. All these literatures actually speak one language—that of Socialist construction. All these literatures have been welded by the Congress into a more intricately interconnected whole.

The revolutionary literature of the capitalist countries is not a stranger to this great festival of Soviet culture. Dozens of leading revolutionary writers of the capitalist countries are participating: German, French, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Danish. . . . Only the Americans are absent. Why?

Some utterances of the members of the Congress:

Babel: "I think the men and women here gathered have never felt such a power of unity as we feel now. Like the entire working-class, we are united by the community of ideas, thoughts, struggle. Not many words are needed in this struggle, but they must be good words."

Panferov: "The writers need that wise simplicity of literary work which will make books lead millions."

Yasensky: "To be a Soviet writer means to use the word that has been heated white by the flame of Communism to remodel the world."

Sobolev: "The Party and the Government have given the writer everything. They have taken away from him only one thing—the right to write badly."

Shirvan-Zade (Armenia): "I am seventy-six years old, but never have I felt as free, as happy as in the last eight years. I was asked why I do not get old. Those who ask do not understand that I am living under the Soviet system."

Ehrenbourg: "We astonish the world, not by our machines, but by the men and women who make the machines. We do not just write books; we change life with our books. Our most decisive achievements lie in something different. They lie in the fact that there have been created conditions for unlimited achievements, that the Socialist revolution has cleared unlimited roads for art, that the proletariat and its Party, the Party of Lenin—Stalin, has guaranteed for our artistic literature a future compared to which the present is only a modest prologue."

Shabanov (Far East): "We find ourselves at the very farthest corner of the Soviet Union, where the smell of gun powder is often in the air, and we, the writers of the Far East, wish to say at this congress and to the entire Soviet Union that we will give to the Party and the Government not only our powers but, if needed during a war, also our lives."

Yashvili (Georgia): "You and I, Comrades Russians and Comrades Ukrainians, Comrades Armenians and Comrades Uzbeks, Comrades Turkmen and Comrades Jews, you and I, we are the children of a good, honest fatherland. Our fatherland is noble because its foundation is labor. Such labor and such nobility are required also of us writers and, when we sit down to work, we cannot forget this.

"I wish to say a word to our foreign guests. Esteemed Comrades and esteemed guests, do breathe as deeply as you can the pure air of our fatherland. Get used to it. We are all convinced that in the not distant future your countries will also have an air similar to that which you breathe here."

Leonov: "You and I shall be the witnesses of great events. Before our very eyes new Soviet Republics will emerge, in thunder and hurricanes will awaken the consciousness of the colonial countries, new, more perfect forms of human life will be created. We shall be the participants of world congresses of Socialist literatures for which this hall will be too small."

[*In a second article, to be published next week, Moissaye J. Olgin will discuss the literature of the national minorities of the Soviet Union, and the welding together of this literature with that of the Russians into one great unit—the chief objective of the All-Union Congress of Writers.*—THE EDITORS.]

The Last Frontiers

RUTH LECHLITNER

There were lands once to the West virgin and waiting:
When the near acres were sucked dry and the old men
Wisely in famine perished, then were the young driven
By hunger to the far valleys, strong-limbed, to reap, to mate
Under lark song and prairie wind. And so sufficed
The earth-taste to men's bellies, so were made abundant
The wombs of their women. (There were dreams in your bones
O pioneers, that we have long forgotten!)

New seed to that soil; but into the heavy furrows
Fell other and stranger seed: sweating blind under the sun
Men poured into the young corn their heart's blood
That we might harvest golden alphabets.
So from our eyes the light from those wide fields perished:
In the shadow of brick walls we bent, book-wise, forgetting
Wind-syllables in the long grass, leaf-words in spring.

We slept apart from the earth; we knew hunger
Not of the flesh, and we set our feet upon the highways
Toward those frontiers of shining glass and stone—
There were we driven, there indeed you have seen us:
Boys in the grey day stale from rented bedrooms,
Boys with pale hands and flaccid loins
Chained to thick ledgers, bound to polished desks;
Girls with hard eyes and calloused fingertips,
Nervous, sterile-scented, having careers. . . .
(Only we never knew that the black steel girders
Were set in prairie corn; we were never told
That the dark furrows bore this leaping stone
To the wings of the highest tower.) And so we came,
So we were used, and so again cast out:
There are too many of us in these days of famine.

We are the young uprooted: where are the new lands
Waiting us? (Let us think now of our elder brothers
Who had no time to question before they were answered
With the points of bayonets: shall we too be answered?
Let us think now of our younger brothers
Idle on the home steps, their yet untried hands pleading
And empty; their untried fresh minds wasting. . . .
Whose need rots their young bones: shall they too be answered?)

We remember our books—and somewhere under the sick breath
Of old men, somewhere beneath the patriotic dust
There were new words that leap to our minds like fire
Now we recall them: words that shall serve us now
In place of bread. Regenerate in revolt
We shall rise up, create our own new lands,
For the last frontiers are taken.

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Correspondence

Help the Marine Strikers

To The New Masses:

Today tens of thousands of marine workers in every craft of the industry along the Atlantic Coast and gulf ports are on strike against starvation wages, for shorter hours and union recognition.

The Workers' International Relief together with the Joint Strike Preparations Committee for the Marine workers is mobilizing all forces sympathetic to this heroic struggle in a relief movement. To feed the strikers in the four strike-relief kitchens now being forced, food, funds, and volunteer help are needed desperately.

Men who have been working at starvation wages now face empty cupboards on strike. Their wives and children, as well as the strikers themselves, look to all friends of labor to help them. Readers of The New Masses, please do not fail the marine strikers! Rush your contributions in whatever form: volunteer aid, funds, food, clothing medical supplies or the use of your car, to relief headquarters, 870 Broadway, New York City today. Address all contributions to: W.I.R. Marine Strike Relief Committee.

Roy Hudson,
Joint Strike Preparations Committee.
Edward Royce,
Workers' International Relief.

Milk Prices and the Farmer

To The New Masses:

Apropos your editorial on the Drink More Milk campaign in New York State in the current, Oct. 9, issue.

Not only has the State appropriated this half million dollars for the campaign (contract awarded N. W. Ayer) but the money is raised through a compulsory check off of one cent a hundred pounds on the farmers' milk check. The Milk Control Board never does anything except at the expense of the producer. Meanwhile, the Grade A milk you refer to as retailing at 14 cents, fetches an average of 3 and a half for the farmer, the Grade B of course brings even less. Line this up with the fact that this is at least two cents less than the most conservative cost of production figures and the fact that feed has jumped in the last 18 months from $20 to $40 a ton and the activity of the Milk Control Division becomes even more clearly that of a governmental division of the Food Trust.

The Division has been striving consistently to maintain the dealer's spread. It has steadily avowed its plan for preventing chaos in the dairy industry to be: securing cost of production plus profit for the Milk Trust. It has steadily refused to seek cost of production for the farmers. This would probably be its position even if Lehman's relatives did not own 38,000 shares of Borden's.

David Lurie.

Scripps-Howard Gives Light

To The New Masses:

When Roy Howard adopted the slogan, "Give Light and the People Will Find Their Way," for his string of newspapers the nobility of the gesture became fully significant during the publishers' conference which broke the back of the San Francisco general strike. For hand in hand with Hearst's Call-Bulletin and Examiner and the bankers' Chronicle, the Scripps-Howard News miseditorialized and published its quota of misleading information. The News, being San Francisco's great "labor" organ, found itself in a difficult position. However, this position was ameliorated thanks to Mayor Rossi's committee of "Determined Citizens" on the Police Department's payroll who smashed Communist headquarters, and General Johnson's University of California speech in which he urged all super-Americans to raise hell with the Reds. So there being no other financial angels except its department store advertisers, the News strung along with Herbert Fleischacker and helped to strangle the strike.

As an aftermath of this tremendous demonstration of the solidarity of union labor in San Francisco the street circulation distributors of the News and other San Francisco dailies decided to form a union of their own. They had never been organized and when the general strike came, to quote one of them, "We felt like rats." So several discussed the matter and in August approached the A.F. of L. organizer in the Central Labor Temple and requested aid in forming their organization. This official, directly under the thumb of "Sell-out" Casey of General Strike fame, was loathe to give any assistance but was finally compelled to do so. So a charter was obtained and the unionization of San Francisco circulators began. It progressed rapidly, the men themselves recruiting members and the organizers doing nothing at all.

About a dozen men on the News joined, three from Hearst's Call-Bulletin and one from Hearst's Examiner; none from that notorious labor-hating sheet the Chronicle. With this nucleus it was expected the union would grow into a substantial organization. However, the three Call-Bulletin men were immediately fired, directly for union activities. Also three of the San Francisco News men were fired. But the management of the News, well-versed in subtlety, fired these men as a "measure of economy."

Immediately the whole street crew walked out. Since the organization had never been perfected it was totally destroyed. No help whatever came from the Labor Temple. Each employee was called back in turn and forced to sign a yellow-dog statement and those refusing were fired outright. The San Francisco News had solved its first labor problem. Street men from the scab Chronicle, who usually work nights since the Chronicle is a morning paper, took the News men's routes. The street circulators' union is dead. Some circulators are out of jobs. And those still working are in fear of their jobs. The News transferred the president of the union to another department in order to escape the direct challenge which would have resulted from his being immediately fired.

San Francisco. D. B.

"A Matter of Terms"

To The New Masses:

After reading Genevieve Taggard's article and then your comment I feel that you have practically neutralized any effect she may have had. I was reading her article very carefully keeping in mind the problems that confront the proletariat writer and appreciating the adjustment that a person, I should say a poet, like Miss Taggard must have reached and also the struggle that must have preceded it, when I finally reached your comments, which immediately dispersed any concrete ideas I may have grasped from her. And I resented your intrusion.

Miss Taggard was dealing in ideas which had developed from her own way of arriving at the fact that Communism was her philosophy. In thinking and reasoning unless we use the mathematical formula of Spinoza or Einstein there are always blind spots which the individual has leaped past blindfolded because the mind often thinks in flashes and may therefore arrive at the same conclusion as others in his individualistic fashion. I condone this because in reading something the reader does likewise. So that when your cold water had reduced the article to a matter of terms I was for the first time aware that we were dealing in rhetoric instead of the problems of human beings. And it appeared to me that Miss Taggard was trying to cut through the mass of terminology that is so characteristic of communist writers of the old school, and talk of her conversion the same as she would think of it. And right now I would like to start a revolt against the grouping of tremendous ideas into a flippant phrase. (For instance what in hell is right deviationist.)

Although I do not disagree with what you say about Miss Taggard's article, and I realize that it forestalls adverse criticism of The New Masses, I find it necessary to bring to the attention of the editors to have some faith in these writers who are reducing what would in bourgeois minds be abstractions and permit them to talk in symbols that are more to the understanding of all people, including the hated bourgeois. For in reading your reference to bourgeois Romanticism it immediately occurred to me that a proletarian worker's son or daughter with a high school education would fall into that category. You are right. But how are we ever going to bring understanding to them except through talking to them in plain language instead of this devastating terminology which always leaves a person in search of understanding, with his mouth agape. Your criticism to me implies that Miss Taggard should have written a book. And here again you are right. Novels and books at this stage of the game should deal with the forces and reasoning and the human elements which have influenced one to cast aside his old ideology and become a fighter in the class struggle, the leveler of all classes. I am wary of involving myself in an argument regarding the subject matter of Miss Taggard's article because I fear that I also would involve myself in a battle of terms. But on the whole I will say that it meant something to me and believe that the force of many such articles will accomplish one of the greatest functions that gives The New Masses the right to exist.

Therefore I say, More articles in the language we understand and undoubtedly you will in time bring us to a point of intimate understanding with this new slang which our time of birth has withheld from us.

Fred Smilow.

Facts on Soviet China

To The New Masses:

Joseph Barnes, in the issue of September 11, objects to my review of the *Economic Handbook of the Pacific Area.* I will not enter into a discussion of logic, but I will reaffirm my position that this book flagrantly omits facts which are of vital importance. I have no quarrel with the facts contained in the handbook, but I am greatly concerned with the facts and statistics omitted. In order to correctly interpret the situation in the Pacific area, one would have to wade through much other material which is now readily available.

Let us take an example. Of the five or six specific criticisms in my review, Mr. Barnes chooses to reply to the one on Soviet China. Let us examine that subject on which he cannot seem to find figures. The Lytton Report has information on Soviet China. The Japanese White Book has a volume exclusively on Communism in China. Official and semi-official Nanking books and periodicals are fully and expressively aware of the Soviets. The latest book, *Suppressing Communist Banditry in China* even gives specific figures on the Red Army. The Communist International and the Impreccor have written voluminously on the subject. Official Soviet China documents are published by the dozen. In fact, there is hardly a journal of any type throughout the world that does not occasionally print articles on Soviet China. And yet not a word in the above-mentioned handbook.

Mr. Barnes may say that these figures are biased and controversial. Yet he printed Manchurian figures published by Japan which are admittedly highly biased and falsified. How official must figures be before they are acceptable? And when do figures become official? It is my sincere hope that Mr. Barnes will be instrumental in collecting a second volume of this handbook which will include the omitted material and so present a complete and thorough picture of the Pacific area.

John Phillips.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

American Spectator—A Nazi Sheet

TO UNDERSTAND The American Spectator it is necessary to glance briefly at the sources from which it came.

Nearly eleven years ago the green cover of the American Mercury began to shed its chlorine shade on the stands. The industry of setting up exaggerated straw men, and knocking them down with excessive bluster was on its way as a substitute for any kind of thought in American upper circles. It must be said that Mencken was as ingenious as he was indefatigable. The invention of the "booboisie" was only one of his triumphs, and that required long and arduous hammering. Once the trick was discovered, the grotesque bladder inflated, the vaudeville of exploding it could be repeated month after month. Sinclair Lewis brought on his Babbitt to join the cast of the circus. Up and down the country, Mencken sent his scouts, usually newspaper men whom it was useful to keep occupied exposing anything else but themselves and their own industry, to dig up more outlandish antics of the Mencken-and-Lewis robot. But no Babbitt above a certain rank was thus lampooned and mimicked. It was given out that the paper represented a "better class," a "civilized minority"—urban *parvenus* of any profession or racket, who had learned to distinguish between two French wines. The cackle of George Jean Nathan was heard offside in catalogues and purple passages, eternally annotating the credo. Mencken satisfied himself with the blunt qualification that he wrote for "men of honor." But when he ranted about men without honor, it was usually to castigate small fry—poets who had failed to enclose postage stamps, or the like. He took on no stronger adversaries than clubwomen and fundamentalists. The line of attack had a definite class basis. It victimized the lower middle class for its conditioned inferiorities, but in doing so the method was to identify the lower middle class with the "mere clod"—that is to say, with the worker, who was not worthy of mention, beyond his use as a measure of scorn.

The circus often grew stale and languished. Mencken would offer his body, with copious press notices, as a target for the purity leagues, or assault the unequal antagonists of prohibition, or take a fall out of the gods to liven it up. In time, some of the original favorites had to be dropped—Cabell, Ernest Boyd, even Nathan — unable to survive the test of sustained performance; and new writers were discovered to contribute piffling "exposures," local legends, inside newspaper tattle—most of which, judging by the one or two cases in which you happened to know the facts, were false. The future historian will find little of sound criticism, penetrating analysis, or dependable social history in the whole long melange of the Mercury, devoted exclusively though it was to the "American scene." The show as conducted by Mencken and his changing galaxy of stars was bankrupt long before Mencken himself stepped out. Had he continued as editor, the magazine, with its philosophy and tradition, could only have become one of Propaganda Minister Goebbels' chief foreign organs.

* * * * *

But with the passing out of Mencken, the American Mercury gave birth to a child, the American Spectator. At any rate, it was edited by the favorite chore boys of the Old Master — Boyd, Nathan, O'Neill, Cabell. With its antique type-faces and newspaper format, it made a stir of gnats in the literary air. The announcement ran that the publication was "circulated simultaneously in England, France, Germany, Austria and Italy" (but not in Moscow), and was "on sale on all the first-class trans-Atlantic steamships," and "on file in all American Embassies in Europe and elsewhere." Dreiser's name appeared for a time, but he soon withdrew from that galley.

Cabell began to emit pale narcissistic gleams from his shallow waters. O'Neill analyzed his own plays and discussed his own style. Ernest Boyd had once blown up the balloon of "Aesthete, 1924" (in the first number of the Mercury), and snapped the bubble of his own making with a lighted cigarette. This is entertainingly related by Malcolm Cowley in "Exile." But most of the "aesthetes" stigmatized by Mr. Boyd have gone left, in the interim, and gained intellectual clarity, while he is deploring their loyalty to "antiquated" Marx, and writing about literary teas or the "lost art" of adultery. In a recent article Boyd patronizes the vigorous talent of the Soviet writer, Ilya Ehrenbourg, but he does not forget to offer pompous rebuke to what he calls "the doctrinaire querulousness of his American comrades." It is the old technique of tolerating abroad what you safely revile at home. Nathan's hand was principally felt in the editing, in the choicely sprinkled wisecracks, the diction of the rewritten articles; but from time to time he turned aside to beat the dead donkey of the theatre, or attack the horrendous pansy peril. A new school of police gazette writers, notably the author of *The Barbary Coast,* was developed to feed the Spectator, ephemeral as the old feeders of the Mercury. A sample of the unsigned editorial is the following:

"Education was never intended for mass consumption . . . The educated man is now an interloper whose domination has been ruined by the simple process of multiplying his number until his class has been multiplied out of existence." This in February, 1933, anticipated one of the leading policies of Hitler: Confine education to the few.

In its two years' existence the American Spectator has published one moving and noteworthy piece: a narrative called "Sixteen Years," by Tom Mooney! One wonders how it got there.

* * * * *

So far the effect was only another mild titillation for the idle. In the editorial sanctum the sacredness of individual opinion was preserved; a certain "liberal" confusion and dissent was the approved note; all that had been demonstrated was that the "aesthetes of 1934" assuredly were not the young men, but the old and sterile.

But with recent numbers the Spectator has taken an unmistakable position on the rotten Right. It has adopted an openly Fascist stand, expressed up to date in two policies: Split the growing solidarity between the American Negroes and whites for Negro emancipation, and: Defend Nazi Germany. The first task was begun in the August issue. The Negro bourbon reactionary, George S. Schuyler, was hired to write a vicious attack on the Scottsboro boys, Angelo Herndon, Samuel Leibowitz, and the whole militant working class defense built up around the victims of lynch-courts in the South. Herndon and others brilliantly answered the attack of this Negro lackey of the white ruling class. Replying to a similar article by Schuyler in the Pittsburgh Courier, of which he is a columnist, Herndon, young Negro Dimitroff of Georgia, wired:

"In your Pittsburgh Courier column of August 25, you say, 'Herndon is out on bail and will probably skip it like all the rest.' Just as you repeatedly knifed the Scottsboro boys by sneering at the mass fight for their freedom, so you attempt to knife me also . . . After thousands of workers and sympathizers have worked, sacrificed, and actually suffered to get together $15,000 demanded by the Georgia lynchers for my bail, you stab me in the back . . . No doubt your attack on me will win the approbation of the lynch press of Georgia, just as your attack on the Scottsboro boys has already won the approbation of the Alabama lynch press. I shall not skip the bail the workers have collected for me . . . I shall return to Georgia ready to continue the fight."

In the September Spectator the campaign reaches a lower level of degradation, but also becomes more clearly the Fascist line. The numbers opens with an article called *The*

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Newest Psychosis, by George Weiss, Jr. The newest psychosis is Germanophobia, says this masterpiece of obscurantist nationalism. Mr. Weiss complains bitterly of the anti-Nazi "bias" of the American capitalist press! A few excerpts from the article itself best indicate its significance:

"The Times lines up its galaxy of foreign correspondents to demonstrate, with wearisome iteration, that Fascism *a l'allemande* is a reversion to ancient Teutonic barbarism. . . . The illness of King George was handled with a reverence that no German official ever could expect . . . there is a lack of objectivity in the presentation of news reports" . . . (crocodile tears) "news columns should be as dispassionate as human frailty permits" (!) "Yet generalization, carping criticism and even inaccuracies are common in the present-day reporting of the German scene."

These statements are not torn from the context of an ironic hoax. They are written by Weiss in all seriousness. But American Naziism can descend even lower, for example: "At first the Communists seize upon the watchword. Perhaps it is, 'Free Pumpenheimer!'" (the reference is to the heroic German leader Ernst Thaelmann. O.J.). "The movement spreads to the cloak-and-suiters and the Arbeiter Ringe. . . . An American League to free Pumpenheimer blooms into existence. Mass meetings are held; funds are raised . . . If Pumpenheimer should renounce his beliefs and exchange Marx for Hitler, the rain would descend and the floods come, and within twenty-four hours the erstwhile martyr would be dragged into the vile dust whence he had sprung, his cousin living in Philadelphia would require a police escort," et cetera, et cetera.

No reference is made to the thousands imprisoned and tortured like Thaelmann himself, to the hecatombs of the executioner, the police-arson of the Reichstag, the hideous court-travesty of the Reichstag trials, the proscription of the poorer section of the Jewish people, the enslavement of women, the strangulation of culture . . .

Elsewhere in the same issue, Kenneth Campbell, of the editorial staff of the New York World-Telegram, writes similar bilge about the Congressional hearings relating to the Nazis. He moans over the "turgid bitterness of an atmosphere," and the alleged fact that "no chances were taken that might cause the record to show anything by way of Nazi rebuttal." Sympathy for the Nazi butchers in these writings is not even glozed over, it is not subtly implied; it is laid on thick with a sorghum brush.

Minor contributions, like *Book Bum* and *Fascist Dialogue,* continue the strain of satire at the expense of the workers and the destitute. And Mr. George S. Schuyler again defiles his blood in an incredible series of gutter-press paragraphs. Some of these purport to claim certain superiorities for Negroes (largely ascribed by the lick-spittle Schuyler to degrees of white descent), but the object is clearly to inflame white against Negro, mulatto against black, Negro bourgeois against Negro workers. One quotation will indicate the lubricity of method employed by this capitalist agent in the Negro ranks to distort the truth:

"One of the chief reasons for the failure of the Communists to snare more black bucks has been the poor quality of the female bait used. In these sophisticated days, it seems, something more than a mere ruddy epidermis is demanded before Sambo will quit the two old parties." In another place, Schuyler boasts that *five* Negroes have been acquitted of rape charges by Southern courts as against 5,000 lynched! He crowns this defense of Southern justice with the warning: "Sam Leibowitz and I.L.D. take notice."

But enough has been said to show the avowed position of the American Spectator today. Thus have the mighty fallen; the "men of honor" have come to wallow in the mire of treachery, lies and a phosphorescent inversion of "culture"; the false reputations and fake "geniuses" of the twenties are now led by such scabby hacks as Weiss, Schuyler and Co., probably lured by the hope of a subsidy from Stinnes, Krupp, Hugenberg, and the other keepers of the Hitler bankroll. Decayed literary gents, having lost their vogue, must have money. They see the end looming. Their precarious position, which hung on the tolerance of a spend-thrift expanding capitalism, now with the rapid decay of American Capitalism, is tottering. They look longingly toward the Swastika, they yearn for the mass-executioner to support their always backward and parasitic "philosophy," for the rule of the exploiter to line their pockets.

Sherwood Anderson is one of this crew. His name appears as one of the editors in the recent issues dominated by the filth of Schuyler and Weiss. Sherwood Anderson last winter described a delegation to Hoover—sent by the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners to protest the murder of Bonus Marchers—as a kind of choice burlesque, with himself as the leading clown. This appeared in The New Yorker. Anderson also writes for the Moley-Astor-N.R.A. organ, Today, which vilifies the struggles of the workers. The time has come for Sherwood Anderson to declare unmistakably where he stands: with the potential Fascist assassins of The Spectator or with literary allies of the rising revolutionary movement in America? Between them is an abyss. There is no middle ground.

ORRICK JOHNS.

Aborted Renaissance

THE CHINESE RENAISSANCE, by Hu Shih. University of Chicago Press. $1.50.

THERE is a fable, I remember, of a lantern that was used first as a headlight, then as a tail-light, and finally was unhooked and thrown into the ditch. At one time Hu Shih was a headlight of the advancing forces of the Chinese Revolution; later he was a tail-light; today he sputters feebly in a ditch. The revolution—and reality—has passed him by.

I remember, ten years ago, listening to a lecture by Hu Shih in Columbia University. Today, I read this book, published by a university foundation, consisting of a series of lectures delivered, again at an American University, as part of a course endowed by a religious woman for the furtherance of religion. Hu Shih, in these lectures, says less, and says it less forcibly than he did ten years ago, in the lectures I heard at Columbia.

Why he took the opportunist path, why he preferred academic honors to revolutionary honor, the sterile quiescence of university halls to revolutionary action, is hard to say. It was easier for him to be a gentleman than a labor leader, easier to speculate than to act. The loss is his—and the Chinese revolution's. For Hu Shih shows, still, in this book, his keen powers of analysis, and his brilliant expressiveness. How much better it would have been to use these talents in the fertile soil of the revolution rather than in the prattle-chambers of an American university, where only decorous echoes can be raised!

A mind cannot even stand still, though it might wish to. It must go forward, or back. Hu Shih's mind, not having gone forward, has gone back. From the evidence in this book, the rationalist, Hu Shih, may, in time, like the frightened neo-mystical doctors of science, trying to earn for themselves the perquisites of a priesthood, ultimately propound some form of psychism.

Ten years ago Hu Shih spoke with effective irony against the "mystic" Orient; today, in these essays, he speaks of "Chinese" tendencies and characteristics of civilization, which can easily develop into the same mystic nationalism that beclouds the human mind in every capitalist country but most hysterically in Germany, Italy and Japan.

In analyzing the causes for China's backwardness especially as compared with Japan he makes some penetrating observations. He points to the absence of an effective ruling class capable of directing affairs and of a military tradition by which such a class could have maintained its control and carried through its purposes; and of the slow and accidental diffusion of Western civilization in China as compared with the rapid but controlled assimilation in Japan. On the other hand the more important economic factors are ignored. The fact that capitalist production found conditions more favorable in Japan than in China is not touched upon, and the power of a capitalist economy over a feudal economy is glanced off.

This omission defines at once both Hu Shih's limitations and his prejudices. It prepares one for the distorted history he subsequently gives of the Chinese Renaissance.

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In the early history of this renaissance, when the fight for the dignity and practicality of a vernacular language was important, Hu Shih played an admirable role; it is natural, I suppose for the writer to dwell upon this, although, it has long ceased to be of great moment, its historical task having been done. Since then the Chinese Renaissance has matured. The groundwork of a popular language having been laid and mass communication having been made possible the Renaissance has passed swiftly through Occidental literature until it found the literature suited to its revolutionary mission, the Marxist-Leninist literature and ideas. By misrepresenting, and understating the status and influence of this body of ideas and writing Hu Shih's version of the Renaissance becomes a distortion. In this respect he resembles those capitalist historians who write the history of modern China leaving out the most important element of contemporary Chinese history, the growth of the Communist revolution and the establishment of Soviet China.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Making Faces at the Revolution

CHALLENGE TO THE NEW DEAL, Edited by Alfred M. Bingham and Selden Rodman. Falcon Press. $2.50.

IT HAS been a matter of note that some of the cleverest and most influential enemies of the working class have been prepared for their carreers by a taste at the Marxian spring. The "little knowledge" of these renegades has indeed turned out a dangerous thing—for the masses. It was as "Marxists" that MacDonald, Mussolini, Briand, and Pilsudski learned to know the nature of capitalist society and were thus equipped to advance themselves in it. At some point in the history of these men there came a time when they refused to take "orders" and when it seemed to them that their comrades were not speaking the "British" or the "Italian" or the "Polish" language, as the case might be.

Perhaps it is harder now for renegade Marxists to find room at the top of the capitalist heap. Perhaps it is too obvious that a position on the top of that heap promises no great permanency in the critical present. Whatever the reason, the modern type renegade prefers to continue as a "revolutionary" rather than undergo public conversion to the faith of the enemy, but by these same signs — "independence" and "Americanism" —ye shall know him. As revolutionary, he must, of course, raise up a new group to embody his message. And his main source of recruitment will be those who have already set out on the road to the left. Somewhere this side of the logical goal of these leftward travelers —which is of course in this country the American section of the Communist International— our Scylla-renegade will take up his station to snap up the unwary.

Seen from the perspective of the leftward traveler's natural and inevitable goal, it is remarkable how the seemingly extreme diversity of all these "movements" assumes the uniform white of opposition to a workers' revolution. That this is no mere optical illusion due to the great distance is proved by the eager zeal with which all these partylets, "left" or right, will unite to denounce *in the same terms* the party of world revolution. From Trotskyite and Farmer-Laborite come the same withering charge: the Communist Party is not American. It takes guidance, forsooth, from the headquarters of the Comintern in Moscow rather than from J. P. Morgan's in Wall Street. The imagination falters before the horrendous pictures that would probably be drawn of the "betrayal" of the "white" revolution should the Comintern ever decide to move its headquarters to Shanghai. Perhaps, after all, capitalism isn't so very American either. And perhaps in order to become truly revolutionary the American worker will have to purge himself of a certain amount of nationalism, just as his ancestor in 1776 had to purge himself of British nationalism before he could revolt against the Crown.

Challenge to the New Deal is made up of the various articles contributed to the magazine Common Sense by 35 writers between December, 1932 and yesterday. Common Sense is dedicated to the pinpricking of capitalism and the search for an "American" way out. Whatever unanimity there is in this volume is exclusively on the score of dissatisfaction with the present complexion of capitalism in the United States. Next in order of agreement among the contributors comes opposition to the Communist Party of the United States, on the grounds stated above, and most of it more or less crudely implied rather than expressed. It is to be feared that these odds and ends of criticism, to say nothing of the attacks on Communism, will leave the withers of capitalism unwrung. I for one fail to see the "something like a second American Revolution looming ahead" out of the pages of this book, to quote from John Dewey's introduction. All I can see is a confusion of half-measures that would in their turn still have to be solved by "*the* Revolution" of the "disciples of Marx" whom Dewey disparages.

Part One of the book is the Indictment, and it is good reading when allowances are made for the necessary scrappiness. It begins with an article directed against the bankers by former Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin and ends with one by Lawrence Dennis, avowed Fascist. Of real interest, are Mary Van Kleeck's presentation of the essence of labor's case against the N.R.A.; Richard Child's illustration of this case with evidence taken from the history of the Auto Code; C. Hartley Grattan's bringing up to date of the factual material of Lenin's *Imperialism* with reference to the increasing control of American life by monopoly caiptalism; Lillian Symes's account of the starvation of the children of the unemployed; and, allowing for a little bias against "left-wingers," Edmund Wilson's report of how the milk interests wrote the milk code for Pennsylvania.

In Part Two we are treated to a series on Technocracy by the Fathers themselves: Stuart Chase, Howard Scott, Loeb, Polakov. Max Eastman is among them to point out that Marx was a technocrat suffering under the disability ("by an accident of education") of a Hegelian terminology. Selden Rodman, one of the editors, writes an imaginative skit of Roosevelt directing the revolution; let us close our eyes to the fact that under this good, clean fun there is just a tiny trace of serious hope

ALEX BITTELMAN and V. J. JEROME review Lewis Corey's
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that thus it may come about. And Upton Sinclair most frankly tells how he is going to save capitalism through his EPIC plan.

Part Three, of course, is the Contribution, the end to which Prof. Dewey had directed us when he hinted in his introduction at an "increasingly intelligent attempt to solve [America's] own problems in its own way." The keynote is again struck by the editors: "If a radical change occurs in this country . . . it will not come from the scattered followers of Marx but from something more American—in the tradition of 1776." In this section we may expect then that the highly compact followers of Common Sense will enlighten us as to those traditions.

The first to do so is Alfred S. Dale, Treasurer of North Dakota, who writes "Radicals Give Me a Pain in the Neck." We learn that American traditions allow only for an orderly change in the interests of the middle class, and that after the change we must: "Let Ford continue to run his factory, but for the public. Let Swope run his business, but for the public." The second is a truly amazing youth named William Harlan Hale, who patronizingly chides the radicals for not reading Malaparte's case-book on the *coup d'état* and for not learning from the Daniels affair in the Stock Exchange, and who in general shows himself to have a great future as a Fascist provocateur. Our third teacher is Thomas R. Amlie, Chairman of the Farmer-Labor Political Federation. I cannot refrain from quoting this gem from his teachings: "The average American has been taught above everything else to be a good sport. He prizes highly the element of good sportsmanship. When he sees a group of Communists attempting to break up a meeting sponsored by some competitive radical group, he is thoroughly disgusted. As a result, when he sees the American Legion break up a Communist meeting and club a few Communists over the head, his sympathies are likely to be with the Legionnaires"(!) Amlie, too, feels that the middle class is the revolutionary class and that Marx, whom he otherwise "accepts," must be revised on this point.

Enough? Well, there is still Prof. Fairchild's plan for buying up all the big corporations, and Amlie back again with a Twenty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution disallowing all absentee ownership, and Lewis Mumford terrifying capitalism with garden cities. Yes, that's right, instead of thinking so much about the question of power, it seems we should build such fine workers' homes that the capitalists will all die of envy. The American Workers' Party gets a bit of a spread in this volume. Louis Budenz has an insufferably self-important little piece on "Strikes under the N.R.A." that turns out to be all about how he ran things in the Toledo strike. And J. B. S. Hardman has some idea of winning the American worker to a revolutionary movement without telling him anything about its theory. These gentlemen and A. J. Muste take great pride in being able to speak the "American language."

But the editors themselves find their solution in the Farmer-Labor Party, though they admit that it has Fascist and Anti-Semitic tendencies. Strikebreaking Governor Floyd B. Olson is given the place of honor at the end of the book. In view of what has gone before we now know what they all mean by "Americanism." It is loyalty to the interests of the middle class. It is in fact so un-American as to be the same thing fundamentally as Hitler's "Aryanism" or anyone else's chauvinism. Which is what we suspected in the first place.

S. SNEDDEN.

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The End Is Its Beginning

THE FOLKS, by Ruth Suckow. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

RUTH SUCKOW'S familiar field is the Middle-western small town and for a long while she wrote shrewd, quiet stories of that locality for the liberal magazines. All the elements of those stories went successfully together: the form was brief, the prose was terse and the point to be made was small and sturdy. Now, Miss Suckow has come out with a huge novel containing more than seven hundred pages of crowded type!

Times are changing. Sixteen million unemployed. Millions starving or on poor relief. Strikes up and down the country. Thousands of farm foreclosures. Too earnest to go on in the old, placid way, Miss Suckow tries to find some basis to go forward on. As a guage of this change, she takes a small-town Iowa couple, but recently off the farm, and shows the contrast from the careers of their children. The father becomes an officer in the local bank. Excepting a small alcove for his Presbyterianism and another for his family, his life is surrounded by the bank's four walls. His life is serene, healthy and slow-growing as an ear of corn. No problems of conduct exist for him. He is at the bank every weekday, at church every Sunday and in bed every night with his wife. Even such minor vices as the use of liquor and tobacco don't exist for him. He is all corn and kindness and land mortgages at seven percent. His wife's existence is bounded by the house, the church and an occasional "social." She has four children and till they are grown up her life is reflected in their achievements.

But as a way of living, this idyll of dullness and security cannot be handed on. Carl, the oldest child, becomes an athlete and an honors student and though he marries a girl from the local Presbyterian congregation all his promise is betrayed by his wife's frigidity and both their lives are made so miserable that she tries to find a way out by drinking Lysol. Margaret, whose beauty is exotic to Iowa, rebels against her parents' uncomprehending kindness and after a few hectic years in Greenwich Village ends up on Madison Avenue as the mistress of a man who wears expensive tweeds and has "strong, white fingers." Dorothy, the conventionally pretty one, marries a conventional young man from a prosperous family and the conventions are stressed still further when, during the first years of the crisis, they are forced to rent their own house and live in a two-room apartment on the money. But it is Bunny, the youngest, who makes the widest break. From school, he goes to work in a beet-canning factory in Colorado and comes home at the end of the summer with a class-consciousness, proletarian wife.

The detail, the flow of the narrative and the dialogue of *The Folks* are all good. What is lacking is this, that Miss Suckow has made no attempt to find and indicate a basic reason for the break between the generations. Like all writers under the influence of bourgeois habits of mind, she takes for granted that the world's wealth is produced by the people who consume it, not by the millions of farmers and workers whose living never rises above a bare subsistence level. On the basis of representation, Charlotte Bukowska, who spent her girlhood picking beets, is the sole support of the forty-odd characters in the novel, for she is the only wage laborer Miss Suckow presents.

But it must be clear to Miss Suckow that this is hardly the case. As an Iowan she must know that banks in the corn and wheat belts began to crack long before 1932, that thousands of Iowa farmers have been bankrupt ever since the war. And merely as a newspaper reader she must be aware of what effect those seven percent farm mortgages had on the farmers around Le Mars. But the only suggestion that Miss Suckow makes to an underlying cause which would explain the superficial phenomena she presents comes nearly at the end of the book, on page 719,

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where the father, going back to the farm on which he had been brought up, and seeing it standing idle, thinks "Maybe land so good oughtn't to belong to any one man," but that, as his son believes, it should be part of a collective farm! A novel with such a beginning would gain less praise from the capitalist press, but Miss Suckow could make it a much finer book than *The Folks*.

THOMAS BOYD.

Brief Review

BLACK MONASTERY, by Aladar Kuncz. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $2.75.

A vivid, but over-long, account of the sufferings of an Hungarian who was interned in France during the World War. It resembles, but is not so successful as, E. E. Cummings' *The Enormous Room*. Needless to say, the revolutionary value of such books is limited. To Kuncz the whole thing was a nightmare, and the mild case of Francophobia that he developed is hardly a sensible way of preventing the recurrence of similar nightmares.

SINCLAIR LEWIS'S DODSWORTH, dramatized by Sidney Howard. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.

Since Mr. Howard begins by pointing out that the dramatist's art is inferior to the novelist's, it would be ungracious to labor the point. *Dodsworth*, the play, has all the weaknesses of the novel—and they are many—and of necessity lacks most of the virtues. If it seemed, nonetheless, a rather impressive piece, that is largely because the Broadway level is so low, and partly because the mere dramatizing in any fashion of so diffuse a novel is in itself a triumph. Any professional student of the theatre will be interested in the way *Dodsworth* was dramatized, and he therefore will be grateful for the account that Mr. Howard and Mr. Lewis give of the process. Mr. Lewis has reprinted thirty-eight pages of the novel in order to pay tribute to Mr. Howard's ingenuity, and both authors describe in concrete detail the practical difficulties and the way they were met.

THE LAUGHING JOURNEY, by Thomas Lennon. The John Day Co. $2.

Mr. Lennon has borrowed his romantic trappings and touches of whimsy from Donn Byrne, his pornography and fantasy and pessimism from J. B. Cabell, his mysticism from Francis Stuart, and his dialogue from those two popular vaudeville stars, Pat and Mike. There is a little about Irish politics in the novel, but, as the blurb says, it can be "cherished by wearers of the Green and Orangemen alike." There is a little about religion, too, which could be cherished by anybody from the Pope to Millikan. Mr. Lennon has tried to compensate for the confusion and emptiness of his book by writing with enormous—and very wearing—gusto.

IN THE DARK BACKWARD, by Henry W. Nevinson. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $2.50.

During the course of his many years as journalist and war correspondent, Mr. Nevinson had occasion to visit the scenes of many great historical events. This is his main claim to originality as he relates the well-known tales of the fall of Troy, the death of Byron in Greece, the sinking of the Titanic, the battles of Actium, Agincourt, and Jena, and other famous passages from history. Unfortunately, Mr. Nevinson brings to this task little scholarship, less imagination, and certainly no fresh point of view. As a result the book is quite worthless; indeed it is impossible to imagine why it was written at all.

Book Notes

In the light of the expose by Granville Hicks in our last quarterly issue of the anti-Soviet bias of the New York Times book review section, it is significant that its editor, J. Donald Adams, American Commandant of the White Guards, should have been selected by the Joint Board of Publishers and Booksellers to compile a list of books on Russia. The list appears in Publisher's Weekly. Upon analysis, both the inclusions and the omissions are significant. In this list of books on Russia there is not one of Lenin's books, not one of Stalin's books, not one of Gorky's books. Prokovsky's *History of Russia*, the most useful and discerning that has yet been published, is absent, as is John Reed's classic *Ten Days That Shook the World*. None of Anna Louise Strong's books appear; nor does Joseph Freeman's *The Soviet Worker*, nor *Voices of October*, by Freeman, Joshua Kunitz and Louis Lozowick. The bulk of the list consists of anti-Soviet histories; anti-Soviet memoirs, with, to give a tip of the hat to the goddess of impartiality, relatively harmless "liberal" treatments like those of Duranty's and Sherwood Eddy's thrown in. The most daring inclusion is the *New Russian Primer* in its censored American form. Of greater significance, as indicating the sort of respect reactionaries have for such revolutionists as Trotsky and Max Eastman, is the fact that they are *persona grata* in this list.

The compiler of these notes has a friend who objects to Soviet culture. He reads Russian, and had before him, during one of our conversations, a catalogue of the State Publishing House. He shook his head disdainfully. "What a state contemporary Russian literature is in! I go over these catalogues page after page and almost every item is on how to do this and how to do that. How to can peas, how to build an out-house, how to fix a radio, how to lay a cement cellar floor, and so on. Nothing but how

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Of NEW MASSES, published weekly at City Hall Annex for Oct. 1, 1934.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Fay Spiro, who, having been duly sworn, according to law, deposes and says that she is the Secretary of the New Masses, Inc., publishers of New Masses, and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of March 3, 1933 embodied in Section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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to, how to, how to!" On the desk beside us there was also a weekly record of the publications of American publishing houses. There was a book on pirate ships done in models; a city planning book; a book of advice on how to become a success in the business world; a sentimental novel about Negroes; a novel about a young lady who refused to stay down when she was jilted; a book on how to play bridge; a book called *My Body and How it Works;* another one entitled *Enter Murderers;* two Western novels; an account of the family affairs of Queen Victoria; another Western novel; a novel of frustrated love called *Reach for the Moon;* some other works of which typical titles were *Passionate Puritans, Three Loves, Gay Crusader, His Majesty's Pajamas,* and so on. My friend shook his head and decided that Russia for all its fever for building compared favorably, in the matter of its books, with our capitalist output.

Publishers are no longer leaving best sellers to chance. Best sellers are today being artificially created by prizes and book of the month selections and similar devices. English publishers are a step ahead. They are planning to institute an annual gold medal to be awarded by one of its book-of-the-month clubs, at the end of the year, to the author of the duly chosen best book of the year. This would probably then be hawked to subscribers as a special Christmas or New Year bonus. The only difficulty will be that soon dozens of other book clubs will organize their own gold medal juries and that it will not be long before it becomes a commonplace to be a gold medal author. Like so many devices of the competitive system they overdo it. Today half a dozen publishers have their own prize winners in addition to the regular book club selections, the Pulitzer prize, and the various translations of the European prize winners. It will soon be feasible to advertise a book thus: "This book has positively not been selected by any book club, nor awarded a single prize."

Last year the business of the chain of workers' bookshops in New York City increased in two and a half years from $300 a month to over $11,000. This included pamphlets, books and periodicals, and the items handled numbered 150,000 a month. A few capitalist publishers began to see a possibility in pamphlet publishing and a few capitalist bookshops now are putting in a stock of Marxist literature.

Musical Life in Soviet Russia

ELIE SIEGMEISTER

THE summer was not an auspicious season in which to receive impressions of new trends in Soviet music. I was aware of that even before stepping off the gang-plank on the wooden boards of the Leningrad dock. Yet only a few days had passed before I realized that as far as music and the musician were concerned, I had entered a world totally different from the one I had left behind in New York. It was not only the magnificent singing of Red Army brigades that passed down the Nevsky, nor that of red-kerchiefed young Pioneers or groups of athletic, husky-looking young workers and students on an excursion; it was not only the conversation I had with orchestral musicians, conservatory students and professors, pianists and composers that gave me an insight into human context, the "mental climate" of Soviet musical life; it was the simple fact that in all the talks, in all the chance contacts and experiences of the first few days, no mention was made of that subject which is perhaps uppermost in the mind of an American musician these days—unemployment. It was not the scarcity of jobs, but the lack of sufficient forces to take care of those that were open that was the more frequent topic of conversation. Musicians of the hotel we stopped at—who also played in the Leningrad Philharmonic and mostly had other solo and group engagements from time to time (and who incidentally, were of the highest musical calibre)—were amused at my questions as to their standard of living. (They had a right to be, on salaries ranging from six hundred to a thousand rubles a month.) Their chief worries seemed to be the lack of good clarinet reeds and violin strings, and the possibility of not getting away for their month's vacation in the Crimea on the calculated date.

It was the same story I heard everywhere, from dozens of musicians in various cities (and, it might be added, the same story one hears in every industry, in every profession in the U.S.S.R.): enormous and constantly increasing demand for skilled forces; opportunities for advancement broadening each year with the creation of new orchestras, conservatories, workers' clubs; chronic shortage of certain essential materials and supplies, steadily rising moral and physical conditions for the professional and worker. Paradoxically enough, musicians, together with writers, artists, scientists, and engineers, are among the most highly paid workers in the Soviet Union. Superficially, one wonders why this should be so, in a country undergoing a tremendous industrial and economic transformation, where mechanical and technological skill are at such a premium. The answer lies in the insistent appetites of the industrial and other workers for art and culture in all forms. Not only do they want to hear, see and enjoy the best in music as spectators and auditors; they wish to participate, learn how to play, sing, act, dance, themselves. It is this mass interest in music which can be observed on the streets, in the parks, in the workers' clubs as well as in its more conventional manifestation in concert halls and in the theatre that accounts for the huge amount of work and the high earning power of the professional musician. For he is called upon often to supplement his normal work in the orchestral pit or on the concert platform, by leading a workers' orchestra or chorus, or by informal, intimate performances at any one of the numberless workers' clubs. (In Moscow alone there are over 500 of these, most of which run regular concert series for their members.)

I had the opportunity of hearing some of these workers' choruses and understood the enthusiasm of the professional musicians who devote themselves to training them. One of these groups, the Chorus of the Railway Workers' Union of the Moscow-Kazan line, which performed in the auditorium of the beautiful modernistic Railway Workers' Club in Moscow, was a revelation of fiery, spirited, yet exquisitely balanced choral singing. The chorus combined fine voices, perfect discipline with a lustiness and vigor that a professional chorus would have to work hard to equal. Their performance of revolutionary choral and mass compositions by Davidenko, Koval, Szabo, and others made one feel that "they knew whereof they spoke." Not content with these, however, they boldly plunged into a group of "classical" numbers, including choruses from *Boris Godunov* and *Die Meistersinger.* I was amazed at the perfect vocal command and fine musical intuition and understanding which these perfomances revealed.

No doubt much credit is due to the splendid leadership of the professional conductor (Chlebnikov); but equally remarkable are the devotion and enthusiasm of the workers themselves who must have given a large proportion of their leisure hours during the five years this chorus has been in existence to the arduous and painstaking work of building up their own musical proficiency.

This performance, only one of several I heard during the summer, was an eloquent example of that "Self-activity" in which the Soviets are constantly urging and helping the workers to engage. In an interview with the All-Union Director of Workers' Cultural Activities (which is under the guidance of the Trade Unions) I obtained much information as to the extent and manner in which this mass musical work is being carried on. There are, according to the latest figures, no less than 20,000 mass musical organizations (choruses, symphony orchestras and bands) now functioning in clubs throughout the U.S.S.R. all of which have been organized since the Revolution. The chorus which I heard is by no means the best, not even for Moscow. In the recent non-professional musician's Olympiad it ranked well below the top. Many of these organizations have begun to produce opera under the guidance of the leading singers and conductors from the State Opera Houses. All these activities testify to the cultural upsurge that has swept like a tidal wave over the Soviet Union since the revolution and has created "boom" days for the musician.

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This "boom" has expressed itself objectively in the fact that there are now in Moscow, a city of close to four millions, four opera houses, and half a dozen symphony orchestras. The number of music students has increased to such an extent that the Conservatory finds itself hard put to it to handle them all. It has been compelled to open entire new sections to accommodate an entirely new type of student. Among its novel features are a special division for child prodigies (who are given special instruction by the leading professors, and who are financially supported, in many cases *together with their families*—and protected from exploitation by stringent regulations); equally interesting is the Rabfac (workers' faculty), where afternoon and evening classes for factory workers who have shown musical gifts, and are anxious to develop these gifts, are held. Many graduates of the Rabfac have left their factories and become professional musicians, in some cases well-known soloists and members of leading symphony orchestras.

The Conservatory doors are, of course, open to all. Instruction is free and all but a few of the students receive a regular stipend. I met a number of students of the Moscow Conservatory and all were enthusiastic about their work. They spoke particularly about the comradely relations among the students and between students and faculty. One girl, formerly a student at the Juilliard School in New York told me:

> The most wonderful thing about studying here is the total absence of those mean and petty jealousies which most of the American music students—and musicians, too—seem to have. Back in the Juilliard you felt as if every student looked upon the next one with distrust and suspicion. Each was a potential rival, competitor whom you must do your best to outshine. There was none of the true friendliness, the mutual aid, the frank and open discussions of musical problems, the self-criticism given and received in a comradely spirit, that we students have here. Here there is absolutely no trace of that false "Individualism" which consists in trying to down everyone else. The work is so much better, more serious—and then, there is a job waiting for everybody at the end of the four years.

Of all the music workers whose conditions have been altered by the revolution, none has been so profoundly affected as the composer. As this is my own profession, I made a point of meeting as great a number of Soviet composers as was possible during the summer. Many I visited in their homes, where we played, spoke and exchanged opinions on American, European and Soviet music. Although in the course of many keenly interesting hours I spent with these composers, a great number of honest differences and even sharp clashes of opinion developed, the information I gathered as to the physical and moral conditions under which they worked was exciting to the highest degree. It impressed me at first as being fantastic, incredible, like an Arabian Nights' tale. From what I saw and heard I realized that, for the first time in history, the composer is being considered in a realistic, truthful light: not as the "divinely inspired genius" of the romantic biographies; not as the parlor lion or salon ornament, or the plaything of aristocratic or millionaire patrons, to be burdened with exaggerated adulation and left in equally exaggerated neglect. Those Soviet composers whom I met were considered and considered themselves as productive workers. They are treated like any highly skilled, specialized and hence socially valuable worker.

In contrast to most of the composers of capitalist countries, who, unless they have patrons or an independent fortune, are obliged to devote the larger part of their time to teaching, lecturing, conducting, or more often, simple hack work to earn their living (I am not speaking of "popular" composers) all the Soviet composers I met were earning their living through their own music. As in other professions in the Soviet Union, fixed rates are stipulated in the bi-annual or annual contract which each composer gets through the Union of Soviet Composers. Besides his contract, each composer is entitled to additional revenue from the publication and performance (including radio performance) of his music. According to law, each musician is entitled to 2½ percent of the box-office receipts of any play, opera or ballet for which he has written the music. It was no wonder therefore that the composers I visited were able to entertain in lavish manner, have summer cottages, etc. The care with which the Soviet government treats them is more than sufficient to relieve them of all economic pre-occupations, and enable them to devote their entire time to actually writing music.

Another very important difference distinguishes the composers I met in the Soviet Union from their European or American confrères—that is the audience for which they write. Most composers in history have written, more or less consciously, with a particular audience in mind. It is only in comparatively recent years that music has been written "for no one in particular" or "for the composer himself." In the Soviet Union the composer, in common with every other worker, is acutely aware of the social destiny of his work. He has 160,000,000 listeners to bear in mind, an audience whose tastes, interests, and level of musical understanding he must consider. I was told by Bieli that the late composer Davidenko used to spend several weeks each year on a certain ship of the Soviet Navy, for the purpose of living with the sailors, talking, making friends with them, and getting to know at first hand what type of music would best portray their life. Each year many of the young composers study their thematic material and their audience in this way—on collective farms, new construction projects (such as Dnieprostry, Magnitogorsk), on travels in the various Soviet republics, etc.

One has the inescapable feeling, in view of all the favorable conditions that have been established for musical composition that a great new art of music, far surpassing anything that has been created in the past is now in process of foundation. Composers have every incentive—economic security, performance, publication of their work, and, most important, the appreciation of a huge audience of workers and farmers, unprecedented in history. And yet, so far, one must honestly confess, the great masterpiece of Soviet music is still to be written.

Perhaps it is the very magnitude of the task, that of portraying in tone the tremendous historic events of the last two decades, the dramatic conflicts, the huge flood of thought and emotion of the period of socialist construction, that has overwhelmed the musicians of the youngest generation. Only in the symphonies and in the movie music of Shostakovitch does one find a taste of the grandeur, the vitality, the all-engulfing changes that characterize this period. Perhaps it is a too literal sectarian approach to the problem of "going to the masses" what has been holding back the other composers. It was surprising to me to see how many of the younger Soviet musicians are still under the spell of Tschaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakoff, even of Grieg and Mendelssohn — under the theory that "one must write for the broad masses." The implication being of course that the masses would not understand anything more modern. The thorough falseness of this theory is, however, demonstrated by the fact that Shostakovitch, whose musical language is easily as advanced (from the point of view of harmony, dissonance, rhythmic intricacy, etc.), as that of any western composer, is by far the best-known and best-loved of all the Soviet composers.

Although I did not have the opportunity of meeting him, I everywhere heard the praises of this remarkable young man who at the age of twenty-eight has already produced three symphonies, several operas and ballets, besides much other music. It is interesting to reflect that instead of having had to fight against ignorance and musical bigotry, instead of having had to curry favor at the hands of lordly but fickle patrons and pass through years of oblivion, of physical and mental privation—such as has been the lot of practically every great composer of feudal and of bourgeois society (one has but to think of Mozart, Wagner, Mussorgsky), this young genius has been given practical and moral assistance in every way. His new opera *Lady Macbeth* (on a historical, non-revolutionary subject), is now being performed in two cities, and will soon be published. His works are everywhere played, discussed, criticized. He is perhaps the first composer in the history of music who has worked under conditions as nearly ideal as one could hope for on this planet. In face of this will people still believe the hoary lie that "there is no individual freedom for the artist in the Soviet Union?"

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The Theatre

George S. Kaufman: Anarcho-Cynicist

MR. KAUFMAN is a symbol in the American theatre. The co-author of *Merrily We Roll Along* represents Moss Hart, Marc Connelly, Edna Ferber, F. P. A., Morrie Ryskind, Alexander Woollcott and the late Ring Lardner. He symbolizes these people, having been their collaborator at one time or another. In toto, they are one big, bright, fancy-colored balloon, well-made and polished enough to reflect with some degree of accuracy and with a considerable amount of distortion the world around it.

This new play of Mr. Kaufman's (*Merrily We Roll Along* at the Music Box Theatre) is one of the least of his balloons. Not that it isn't as well-polished as his others, or as well-blown up; it just happens that its colors are trite, mediocre, and greatly faded.

It tells the story of a playwright who sells his soul to Southampton and the Savoy-Plaza. During the deal he loses his true friends, his dreams, his Provincetown Playhouse, and his college ideals. But even Mr. Kaufman can recognize a platitude when he sees one, so he and Mr. Hart wrote the play backwards, begining it in 1934 and ending it in 1916 with the hero delivering a high-sounding valedictory at his college commencement. By putting the story in reverse and with the addition of the superlative acting of Walter Abel and Kenneth McKenna, the commonplace theme is given a glamorous coating.

But the real annoyance is neither the mustiness of Mr. Kaufman's thoughts, nor the admittedly too-clever way he has of expressing them. Mr. Kaufman, like his own creation, has sold out a high talent and a fine imagination. The author of *Of Thee I Sing,* (I am lumping Mr. Kaufman together with his collaborators) *Once in a Lifetime, The Butter and Egg Man, To the Ladies, Strike Up the Band,* and *Beggar on Horseback* has shown that he has some inkling of what is going on about him. In their time and place he has set minor bombs under Rotarians, big business men, Satevepost artists, professional patriots, government, and high officials. True, the bombs he placed under their collective bottoms were no more than wet firecrackers; nevertheless, they were all we had. Mr. Kaufman has been our foremost Voltaire. (Do I hear the eminent Frenchman turn over in his grave?)

Now other anarchists throw bombs, or so I am told, but unlike them Mr. Kaufman has always been carefully protected by public opinion as well as by the mocking superior opinion of that intellectual sorority of which F. P. A. and Ogden Nash are the Pepys and the Keats. Kaufman attacked Babbitt only after Mencken had made him groggy, and every two-by-four writer had followed in his wake. He attacked the moving-picture moguls only after the man on the street had gotten up enough courage to do some thumb-nosing of his own. He threw spitballs at Washington and high politics after the oxen stupidity of Coolidge and Hoover had made the presidency a dirty and oft-repeated joke. In short, the fact that Mr. Kaufman is our outstanding satirist should make the spirits of Petroleum V. Nasby and Finley Peter Dunne die again. A satirist makes the truth uncomfortable; Mr. Kaufman has made it respectable.

This last remark finds excellent proof in the character of Jonathan Crale, the rebel, the only sympathetic being in *Merrily We Roll Along.* Crale is a bohemian radical who heard Debs speak in 1918, picketed with the garment workers in 1928, and painted satirical portraits of the rich in 1934. He is the only person in the play who doesn't sell out. Mr. Kaufman has done the radical a fine turn, you will say. Maybe. What kind of a radical has he drawn, however? Crale is a kindly, sentimental bohemian with a Greenwich Village aura as luxurious as an oriental rug. He is as attractive a rebel as was ever lionized at a tea. Not all the honest acting of Walter Abel could buck the precocious conception which Mr. Kaufman as author and Mr. Kaufman as director have given him.

The title of the play indicates the cynical do-nothing quality of Mr. Kaufman's satire. Merrily we roll along to hell is his theme song. And as far as he's concerned there's nothing we can do about it. He seems to be suffering from a kind of adolescence in which a callow cynicism is fused with a liberal and respectable anarchy. But because he and his collaborators are such excellent craftsmen their plays are irritatingly good.

Credit Mr. Kaufman for exposing a small and convincing section of upperclass dirty linen albeit like a fumbling lover he has been afraid to strip naked. Credit him with expert showmanship and with impulses superior to most of his colleagues. Credit him with all this, and you might say, it's about time that Kaufman left off writing irritatingly good plays and wrote one that was good and irritating.

Anarcho-cynicism is a bourgeois complaint. Frequently those who have sold out suffer from it badly. A strong and realistic dose of class medicine sometimes restores that pink complexion.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

Other Current Shows

Can You Hear Their Voices. Civic Repertory, October 6. In painful contrast to its predecessor, the second of the New Theatre nights was a most dismaying affair. The chief reason being the torture which Hallie Flanagan's play suffered at the hands of the Jack London Club of Newark. In view of the excellent job which the same group did of the mass recital *America, America* (on September 21), their unfortunate performance of the far more ambitious farm play has certain implications meaningful to the workingclass theatre. And chief among these is a fact that glared through the whole performance: the actors were foreign to their lines. Between the individual actors and their words were separating walls—the inevitable result of unfamiliarity. Vibrant and convincing in roles that were part of their experience, these same actors fumbled as they attempted to embody characters whom emotionally they failed to understand. And so, at the expense of a difficult evening the Jack London Club has learned where their chief talent lies. The audience learned that the Flanagan version of Whittaker Chambers' story is one of the outstanding possessions of revolutionary dramatic literature and that it must become a repertory piece of an acting group capable of doing it the considerable justice it deserves.

Stevedore, by Paul Peters and George Sklar. Civic Repertory. Go at once if, by some error, you have failed to see it. Without a doubt, the outstanding play in town now reopened for a four-week's run in a production on the whole better than the original of last spring. It can be seen for as little as 30 cents tax free, which is why this department makes your attendance obligatory.

Spring Freshet by Owen Davis. Plymouth Theatre. Well acted yarn about a Bucksport, Maine, grandma who controls the purse-strings and therefore the lives of her family of spineless young folk. Much maudlin love-plotting and deliberately dramatic scenes that never quite click. Once again a surplus of technical competence expended on a mediocre play.

Tobacco Road, by Jack Kirkland from Erskine Caldwell's novel. Forrest Theatre. James Barton does a superlative interpretation of the central character, Jeeter Lester—and before you know it you have heard and seen all sorts of things about the lives of poor white farmers in Georgia—things which tell a great deal (though not all) of the true situation. Well worth the 50 cents—price of the cheapest seat.

Roll, Sweet Chariot, by Paul Green. Ran for just seven performances at the Cort Theatre. It may reopen in a month—just why we do not know. The fact that it is an "experimental play about the Negro" hardly justifies its pointless muddling through which leaves one finally stranded in a wreckage of symbolical and expressionistic local color. However, the musical score and the singing were of such extraordinary beauty that they ought to be salvaged even if the script is to be scrapped. But this should not be necessary, for there is a good deal of worthwhile material in *Roll, Sweet Chariot* and Paul Green—or perhaps someone less intent on obfuscation—ought to try again.

Lady Jane. 48th Street Theatre. A feeble echo of half a dozen "problem" plays of twenty years ago. It doesn't absolutely fall to pieces, because falling implies a certain amount of motion. The competent Frances Starr is hopelessly bogged down in the script, which is all about adultery being better than divorce, provided the other party doesn't know, and even if he does, so what? There's a balcony scene and a mixup over bedrooms. G. W.

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Let's Build a Ditch!

PETER ELLIS

IT WOULD BE very simple, but at the same time mechanical, to dismiss *Our Daily Bread* (United Artists) as a reactionary film. For after all King Vidor is not like the fascistic Walter Wanger producing *Gabriel Over the White House* and *Washington Merry-Go-Round*. He happens to be one of the few directors in Hollywood with any sincerity and honesty and at the same time a real feeling and knowledge of the cinema. Although he has made pot-boilers in his day he has also made the *Big Parade, The Political Flapper, Show People* and *The Crowd*. They're films not to be sneezed at.

His honesty has resulted in a sort of insulation from the Hollywood mob, and this insulation has led in turn to a detached sort of contact with the social forces of every day life. Like Chaplin (who is Vidor's personal, artistic, and political idol) he is a Hollywood anarchist with an inherent sympathy for the underdog.

The inspiration for *Our Daily Bread* was born out of the desire to do something other than rubber stamp movies. Like many confused and well meaning liberals Vidor fell for Roosevelt's demagogy: back-to-the-land-for-prosperity. He then spent some time driving around rural California, to find that other people had also swallowed the same bait. And after being turned down by virtually every studio in Hollywood as a dangerous radical he really was convinced that *Our Daily Bread* was a contribution to the solution of the unemployment problem in the United States. With that firm conviction he mortgaged his personal property and financed his own production. Even there he was limited. The film had to be distributed. Exacting a promise that Vidor would modify his story somewhat, Samuel Goldwyn of United Artists consented to distribute the film.

It took two years to produce. In that time history was making rapid progress. And the film comes hot on the heels of the collapse of the Roosevelt scheme. Had it come a little sooner its false message might possibly have been more effective. Now, when two million more farmers are to be added to the relief rolls this winter, Mr. Vidor's "epic" of subsistence farming is exposed as confused and reactionary; rather than a film with a "limited political outlook."

However, at the same time, it is important to indicate that the reactionary tendency is due to the fact that Vidor steers clear (for manifold reasons) of integrating the process of the poor farmer's struggle against the bankers and politicians. He also isolates the members of the cooperative community from their former neighbors. It seems to me that these aspects arise from an undeveloped political understanding rather than organized anti-working-class propaganda. For the best scene in the film is the sheriff's sale. Here we are clearly shown the conflict between the Sheriff and his deputies against the *organized* workers who "buy" back the farm for $1.85.

There is a definite progress from *The Crowd* (1928) where the mass was the villain (a man's futile struggle against the stupid conventions and brutality of the masses) to *Our Daily Bread* where there is established a definite sympathy for the mass; a faith in the success of cooperation and unity of workers.

This is graphically portrayed in the final sequence where the workers are organized to make heroic collective effort to save their drought-stricken crops by digging a three mile irrigation ditch in record time. It was definitely inspired by the "Let's build a railroad" sequence of the *Road to Life*. It is also a far cry from the typical sentimental white chauvinism of *Hallelujah!* to King Vidor's desire to make a film version of *Stevedore*.

Between Ourselves

JOSHUA KUNITZ, now on tour, will lecture in Chicago on the evening of October 15 at the Medical and Dental Arts Building Auditorium on "Life in the Workers Land." The meeting has been arranged by the Pen and Hammer and Friends of THE NEW MASSES. On Thursday evening, October 18, he will lecture at the National Student League headquarters in St. Louis.

In Indianapolis, on the evening of the 19th, Kunitz will lecture on "The Cultural Revolution in the Soviet Union." This meeting will be held at the John Reed Club, 322 Columbia Securities Bldg., 143 East Ohio Street. He will speak in Louisville on Saturday evening, October 20, under the auspices of the Pen and Hammer.

On Sunday evening, October 21, Kunitz will speak in Cincinnati at the Bureau of Jewish Education, 658 Rockdale Avenue, on "U.S.S.R.—Where National Minorities Are Free." This lecture is sponsored by the Pen and Hammer.

A Hallowe'en Party under the auspices of the Friends of NEW MASSES (New York branch) will be held Wednesday evening, October 31, at Webster Manor, 125 East 11th Street. Ansel Robins and His Red Hatters will provide dance music. The party is free. Admission is by a $1 sub (either an extension or a new subscription). These special subscriptions for admission to the party can be procured at THE NEW MASSES office, 31 East 27th Street, and the Workers' Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street, New York City.

We regret an error in reference to the title of Pat O'Mara's book on life in Liverpool. The complete and correct title is *An Autobiography of a Liverpool-Irish Slummy*.

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